

Window on Jordan

Space invaders hooked!

By Star Staff Writer

Buzzzzzzzzzz, Teeeeeet, Brrrrrr, yep, yep, ops, ops, tack, tack, tack, weeeeeee! These are the noises you expect to hear at an amusement arcade. All day long, the blustering thunder of the machines goes on relentlessly, and the number of customers never seems to end. The arcades are full of boys, boys, and more boys, and they enjoy every minute of it.

It's a way to pass the time of day, and for sure, time does pass. For one thing, there are a lot more machines for the boys to play than there were when I was a youngster.

The slot machines of my day are tame compared to what you have these days. The computer-aided machines range from ET, motor racing, star wars, gunfights, to meteorites falling down, with noise, noise and more noise. They are all there for the entertainment of our youngsters today.

The noise just adds to the fun, and it comes in all sorts. Drrrrrr, ahh, douch, douch, pang, pang, ahhhh, dddd, dddd. It's all go, and the young just keep coming back for more.

For the majority of them, it is their favorite pastime. Something to enjoy, but can leave when

you have had enough. So the story goes, but of course, many become addicted to the excitement, the adrenalin, and the sheer fun of these entertainment halls.

However, the people you should feel sorry for are the employees.

They are there all day long, seven days a week, and are forced to listen to the same never-ending noise. There is no escape for them, except maybe the lunatic asylum, which is where they must end up in if they stay in these arcades for

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The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Issue of prisoners abroad gains momentum

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

"MY UNCLE was studying pharmacy in Turkey, and decided to come home to Jordan during a semester break, traveling overland through Syria," said Hani Sobehi, whose uncle (Khalid Sadeq Sobehi) has been detained in Syria since 1984.

"For a long time, we did not know anything about his whereabouts, until one day, when a magazine published details of a Jordanian lawyer who specializes in such cases," Hani added. It was after paying this lawyer a visit that Hani discovered that his uncle's name was on a computerized list of prisoners in Syria.

There are currently more than 1400 Jordanian prisoners serving prison sentences all over the world. This statistic was revealed this week by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), although there has been some speculation as to the accuracy of the figures.

The issue of Jordanian prisoners abroad has captivated the daily newspapers here in Amman. The recent derogatory remarks by Mustafa Tlass, the Syrian Minister of Defense, fueled this debate. Tlass claimed in a recent interview according to newspaper reports that the Jordanian tribes delayed the arrival of the Saudi forces, that were coming through Jordanian and on their way to link up with the Syrian army in the war against Israel.

The Jordanian response to this accusation has been restricted to the diplomatic channels so far. However, the tacit governmental approval for a recent 90 minute sit-in in front of Parliament, staged by the families of prisoners abroad, is an indication that the matter will not be swept under the carpet. An almost continuous television, radio and newspaper coverage is also ensuring that the issue is

not forgotten.

After the staged sit-in, the families of the prisoners in Syria signed a memo asking for assistance from local and international organizations, to either help arrange visits or to "guarantee" the release of their loved ones.

"Unfortunately, there are no accurate figures on the numbers being detained, because there is no official body representing the case," said Mohammed Azzaydeh, head of the Public Liberties Committee at the Lower House.

"We even have a discrepancy in the number of prisoners in Syria, as the Foreign Ministry says there are 742 prisoners, whilst the Min-



"We need to know the reasons behind the imprisonment of our citizens, and what conditions they are living under," added Azzaydeh, who also confirmed that 30 Jordanians are serving sentences in Egypt, and 10 in the Ukraine (five of whom have returned to Jordan, and are serving out the sentence here according to the Exchange of Prisoners Accord between the two countries). "The majority of prisoners in Iraq and Kuwait have been released, but there are still a few who need our attention," Azzaydeh continued.

The Arab Human Rights Organization (AHRO) has details of Jordanians detained in Iraq, Syria,

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Wife searches for prisoned husband in Syria

When the Foreign and Interior Ministries were able to give her definite answers about her husband's detention, Mrs. Karanesh said, "I finally sent a petition to the Arab Human Rights Organization, but as of yet, I have not received any answer," Mrs. Karanesh said.

Mrs. Karanesh confirmed that her husband was not involved in any political activity and that he worked as a government employee for 20 years.

Today, she lives in fear, believing that she lost the main provider for the family. She desperately seeks assistance from those who can help her find her husband.

The story is a real tragedy. For a family that once lived in peace, their stability has been taken away without reason or understanding.



Tough talking at Wye Plantation hovers on

By Star Staff Writer and news agencies

THE HARVEST of the week-long intensive Middle East peace talks is expected to be reaped soon. The talks—launched at the Wye Plantation on 15 October—were initiated by His Majesty King Hussein and US President Bill Clinton, and have come to a crucial juncture in the stalled peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

King Hussein joined the peace talks on Tuesday, as Israeli and Palestinian negotiators sought to reach a deal by the weekend. "We think that King Hussein has the ability to bring home to the delegations the necessity for making peace," said James Rubin, the US State Department spokesman.

The King arrived at Wye Plantation from Minnesota, where he is undergoing treatment for cancer at the Mayo Clinic. President Clinton also canceled an election trip to California to join the peace talks, and apparently won concessions from both sides. Once a deal is secured, a signing ceremony is due to take place at the White House soon. Some earlier expected that a deal could be signed today, Thursday.

Late Wednesday, King Hussein met with President Arafat and Netanyahu separately, to urge them to pursue a peace accord. The King also met President Clinton on the same day, as the US strongly counts on his continual efforts to reach a peace settlement.

It has been reported that Clinton has won an agreement

The Palestinians, however, insisted that Israel should carry out a third redeployment in accordance with the agreement the two parties have signed in 1997. The Israelis have repeatedly said that only one percent of the territory will be handed over, while the Palestinians want the size and location of the redeployment to be subject

counter claim, saying the attacker was a double-agent working for the Israelis.

Netanyahu dismissed the claim, and called on President Arafat to condemn the attack. The two leaders said later in a joint statement that "the terrorist attack demonstrates the critical importance and urgency of fighting terror, and pursuing

peace. Although the majority of the Israeli people agree on signing such a peace accord, the Jewish settlers have sent a warning to Netanyahu not to reach an agreement with the Palestinians, which as they said, could threaten their own survival.

President Clinton spent two and half hours in a face-to-face meeting with President Arafat and Netanyahu. The three men continued their discussions over a working session, where they were joined by other members of Netanyahu's cabinet.

In the meetings, the newly appointed Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon, strode across the room to shake hands with President Clinton, but avoided a handshake with President Arafat, whom Sharon describes as a terrorist and a war criminal. President Arafat played a military salute to Sharon as he made his entry into the conference room.

The talks have dragged on amid lingering obstacles between the two parties, namely the clause in the Palestinian charter that calls for Israel's destruction, the handling of Palestinian prisoners in Israel, the establishment of the air and seaport in the Gaza Strip, and the formation of a safe passage for Palestinians between Gaza and the West Bank.

The Israelis maintain that all these issues are linked to the security issue, which has yet to be resolved. They also want to delay decisions on safe passage for Palestinians, and on 'unilateral acts'.

"We have entered a phase of very hard bargaining, and although a lot of debris has been cleared, there still remains many obstacles to overcome. Having said that, we are confident that significant gaps are available," said Rubin.

He adds that the subject matter of the daylong talks proved broader. "The work that we think has to be done is being done."

The summit was complicated by a grenade attack in Israel on Monday, in which 64 Israelis were injured. At the time, Israeli sources blamed the Palestinian militant movement Hamas for the incident, but the Palestinians made a



from Netanyahu specifying the location of the 13 percent of the West Bank that is to be handed back to the Palestinians, whilst President Arafat gave his word that the concerns of Israel in regard to security would be given priority.

Pitfalls of a Bestseller in China

By John Pomfret

XIAN, China—He Qinglian is mad and she's not going to take it anymore. The author of perhaps the honest nonfiction book in China these days has come to this ancient capital on an ironic quest: to denounce a book written under her own name.

Her book, "China's Pitfalls," constitutes the most cogent critique of China's economic reforms to have come out of the country. In it she blasts everyone, but mostly the Communist Party, for creating a situation where wealth is concentrated in the hands of sleazy bureaucrats, national resources are plundered for the benefit of the few, and the common folk are left to pick through the leavings with little hope of a fundamentally better life.

He (pronounced Huh) paints a grotesque Chinese landscape packed with rip-off schemes run by party officials, smuggling rings masterminded by cops and officers from the People's Liberation Army, and warehouses managed by government toddlers.

The publication of the book in Hong Kong late last year and a toned-down version titled "The Pitfalls of Modernization" in January marked a major event in Chinese publishing. For the first time, since reforms began in 1978, a Chinese scholar has written a systematic critique from the perspective of one who has lived through the process and seen what has happened to people.

So why is He in Xian, more than 1,000 miles from home? "I'm being ripped off, too," says the 42-

year-old economist as she sits in a ramshackle hotel room strewn with tencups and cigarettes. "It's pretty ridiculous. Here I spent years trying to get this book about the reforms published. I did it so I could raise consciousness about the issues. And what happens? Somebody is eating my flesh, drinking my blood."

And the perpetrators weren't sneaky about it. They came to Xian, for the ninth All-China Book Fair, to openly advertise a new title—"Behind the Pitfalls of Modernization." Its author, they claimed, was the famous He Qinglian. They stuck up a red, white and black poster featuring her name in marquee-size letters, scattered thousands of promotional bookmarks and set up a booth to hawk thousands of copies.

The problem, He says, is that she didn't write it. "This is worse than pirating," she says, pointing out that an estimated 330,000 copies of her actual book have been sold illegally without her getting a cent (in addi-

tion to 100,000 copies sold legally by her publisher).

He's solution is straight out of America. "I'm going to sue," she says, "and go to the press." Reporters from the freer southern Chinese newspapers and TV stations have traipsed in and out of her hotel room. One television station filmed an acrimonious exchange between He and journalist Zhu Jianguo, who is the real author of the book with the misleading title.

In her book, He argues that the disparity between rich and poor here is vast and increasing daily. Calling China's reform "crippled" and "half-baked," she advocates "making justice the starting point" of the next round of changes.

He at times resembles a romantic, longing for the equality of the old days of socialism but reveling in the country's new freedoms. Still, her book constitutes a powerful challenge to many American China

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World REPORT

35.1.1998

Friends of the Environment

Giving hope to future generations

By Ghassan Joha
Special to The Star

THERE IS a high level of awareness in Jordan about the relationship between development and the environment. The Kingdom has lost nearly 23 percent of its agricultural land due to desertification, and it is this first hand knowledge that has prompted the Kingdom to adopt a national environmental strategy. Thankfully, there is now a substantial institutional infrastructure in place, aimed at enhancing awareness and addressing the problem.

To attain this goal, the Jordanian

Friends of the Environment (FOE) was formed in 1995, with a mission plan to educate youth about the environment. The non-profit society was founded by a group of Jordanian volunteers, who were keen to encourage youngsters to actively improve their natural habitat.

"The main objective of the FOE is to promote constructive dialogue between students on a local, regional and international level," Raouf Dabbas, president of the Society, told *The Star*.

The society is funded by donations from the private sector, national and international organizations, and from environmentally minded Jordanians. Mr Dabbas

said that the FOE is just one player in the game to protect the environment, and that an informal coalition with other cultural, heritage, environmental and archaeological societies was essential if all the environmental laws are to be implemented.

One method of raising awareness is the FOE's annual competition, where students are encouraged to suggest permanent solutions to the environmental problems. The contest, directed at mainly secondary school students, is designed to encourage them to come up with scientific means of addressing the problem. "We try to judge the projects on their level of creativity and spirit of team work," adds Mr Dabbas.

Throughout the school year, the FOE convenes workshops in order to discuss the student projects, and to offer assistance in conducting their research and studies. Lectures are also organized, along with field trips to nature reserves.

In addition, the FOE is holding a drawing contest for students under the age of 15, entitled "The environment through the eyes of children." It aims to encourage children to think about their environment, by painting scenes from various environments that they live in. The drawings are then reproduced as cards, postal stamps, or calendars, all on recycled paper.

Another of the FOE responsibilities is the managing, supervising and facilitating of the GLOBE program in Jordan. The program was formed following an agreement between the Ministry of Municipal, Rural Affairs and Environment and their US counterparts, and is an international hands-on environmental, scientific and educational program.

The FOE also organizes environmental



The delegation in Italy

exchange trips between Jordan and Italy. These programs were made possible following an agreement between the two countries in January 1997. The agreement allows 15 Jordanian students the chance to visit northern Italy for two weeks every year. The students have the opportunity to exchange environmental views with their counterparts, as well as visiting some Italian nature reserves.

"Through the program, we hope that the students will be able to cooperate with other environmental societies, and that our future policy-makers will be encouraged to preserve the vast natural resources in Jordan," said Rama Naber, director of the FOE's media department. Ms Naber accompanied the students during the second such visit to Italy, which took place in September.

The scholarship allows the students to visit the Veneto region over three consecutive years. During this year's visit, the students met with several high ranking officials, as well as members of some private and public sector environmental groups. The program included an array of interesting activities, such as field visits to botanical gardens, an avalanche study center in

the Alps, a meteorology center, waste water treatment plants, and an aquifer study center in Padova. A special visit by the group was made to the city of Venice, where the students were given a comprehensive lecture on the unique city. At the end of the visit, the students met with officials from Venice, who presented them with various gifts from the Veneto region, and stressed the importance of expanding future cooperation in environmental study between the two countries.

On their return to Jordan, the delegation held an open meeting at the FOE headquarters, to review the benefits from the trip. The students and supervisors all agreed that the trip was educationally stimulating, and looked forward to the future cooperation with Italy.

Whilst the public institutions—with their greater financial resources—lead the way in addressing the development versus the environment equation, it is the likes of the FOE (along with other non governmental environmental groups) who are preparing today's generation to cope with the environment of the future.

For the Record

Prince Hassan receives women activists

AMMAN, (Petra)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, stressed on Tuesday the important role of women as a partner for men in the march of construction and development.

During his meeting with a delegation representing women movement activists, Prince Hassan called for ending all forms of discrimination against women, and achieving equal opportunities for all citizens.

"Productivity, infrastructure and the social sector are some of the major issues for dialogue," Prince Hassan said, stressing the necessity of engaging all qualified individuals in identifying the visions needed to deal with these issues.

"Building up a knowledge base and dealing with the issues through precise information and scientific means is a major requirement for success in achieving proper solutions," Prince Hassan said.

Rifai meets with foreign ambassadors

AMMAN, (Petra)—President of the Senate Zeid Rifai held separate meetings Tuesday with ambassadors of the United States, Iraq, the Czech Republic, South Africa and France. Rifai discussed with the ambassadors relations between Jordan and their respective countries and regional and international issues of common interest.

Saudi Minister arrives in Amman

AMMAN, (Petra)—Saudi Minister of Islamic Affairs and Awqaf Abdullah Al Turki arrived in Amman Tuesday on a several-day visit to Jordan to participate in the 8th Conference of the World Muslim Youth which is being held in Amman. The Saudi Minister, who is the head of the symposium, voiced happiness on visiting Jordan, noting that the conference brings together leading figures from the Muslim youth organizations all over the world, to discuss important topics and challenges.

In a welcoming statement, the Saudi minister wished participants success at the conference and expressed thanks to Jordan for hosting it. According to Al Turki, the Muslim youth need care and attention from all Arab and Islamic countries, since they constitute the true wealth of our nations.

Head of Vocational Training Institute meets with Canadian delegation

AMMAN, (Petra)—Engineer Ali Nasserallah, director general of the Vocational Training Institute met with a delegation representing Canadian Colleges, currently visiting Jordan to emphasize the relation between training, industry and the labour market. The three-day visit comes within the frame of the Jordanian-Canadian project to develop skills, through which Jordan has trained 54 individuals.

Minister of Culture meets with Chinese delegation

AMMAN, (Petra)—Minister of Culture and Youth, Talal Al Hassan met with the Chinese delegation currently visiting Jordan. Bilateral relations and means of enhancing cooperation in the field of culture were among the issues discussed during the meeting.

Space invaders hooked!

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too long.
Seriously though, has anybody really thought about the people who have to work in such places? You would have thought that after a while, they would start to initiate the machines, heading home at the end of the day and greeting their families with a grin, wooooosh, baaaang! However, this doesn't seem to happen, thankfully. Every day seems to be one long drag for them. Half way through the day, the employees seem to change into zombies. Their expressions become blank, they register nothing, and they become nothing but walking machines. If this is what happens to them, it does not bear thinking about the effect on our youngsters.

Visit one of these arcades for just 10 minutes, and feel the sense of relief you get on leaving. Assuming you do manage to escape, that is!

Issue of prisoners abroad gains momentum



The mother of Jamal Mekahel, a Jordanian prisoner jailed in Israel, holds his picture as she crosses King Hussein Bridge to the West Bank October 20. Relatives of 14 Jordanians being held in Israeli jails were making their first trip to Israel on Tuesday to visit the detainees.

Reuters

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Israel, Egypt, Kuwait, USA, Germany, Romania, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Iran, and the Philippines.

Meanwhile, Zayed Radaydeh, a lawyer who is following the cases of a few Jordanian prisoners in Israel, emphasized that those detained were being accused of threatening the security of Israel. "We will make sure that no stone is left unturned, and that their cases are constantly brought to the forefront by strikes and other available means at our disposal," Radaydeh told *The Star*.

Jordanians serving prison terms in Israel include those

caught up in the 1948 and 1967 Arab Israeli wars, but difficulties arise in gaining access and information as Radaydeh refuses to have any relations with the Israeli authorities. "I don't believe in the State of Israel, so I do all my business through the Palestine National Authority," added Radaydeh.

Last Tuesday, families of 12 of the Jordanian prisoners were allowed to visit Israel, and they were given four hours with their relatives who are facing sentences of between 20 to 30 years for resisting the Israeli occupation. Some prisoners described their conditions as very harsh, and confined to their families that they were

planning a hunger strike to bring the matter to the world's attention.

An equally disturbing matter, which *The Star* discovered after speaking to some of the families on their return to Jordan, was that some lawyers have been taking advantage of the situation, demanding fees of around JD 1000 for the visits and assurances that their loved ones are still alive. "These lawyers are a fraud, and are preying on the unfortunate circumstances of others to make money," said Hani Duhieh, the general secretary at the Arab Human Rights Organization, who emphasized that their services are carried out free of charge.

Prime Minister Faysal Al Tarawneh, stressed that the mechanism of dialogue is the main and only path between the government, civil and military institutions. These views were delivered during a meeting with chief editors, journalists and columnists at the Sports City, Wednesday. The Frank and open dialogue tackled many of the hot issues that concern Jordanians. In his speech, Tarawneh reiterated he is still very much committed to the Letter of Designation which was passed nearly two months ago.

He pointed out that dialogue must cover every issue in our lives and shouldn't be only about politics. However Tarawneh emphasized that the press has a crucial role to play and highly raised the balanced coverage of the Jordanian press after the declarations of the Syrian Minister of Defense. Questions by the audience following the speech centered around central issues like the 1998 Press and Publication Law, the ongoing dialogue and other social and economic matters.

Other points of discussions centered on the health of His Majesty King Hussein, his role in the latest moves in the peace process and the relations of Jordan with Arab countries.



Photo by Salah Malkawi

Pitfalls of a Bestseller in China

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watchers and business executives whose line is that as long as China's economy is growing, things will work themselves out.

"These people," He says, "spend a lot of time looking at figures. Things go up, so they think things are getting better. They need to spend more time looking at who is getting what, how things are changing, how power is used or abused."

In 1988, after finishing graduate work at Fudan University in Shanghai, He went to Shenzhen, a free-wheeling boomtown near Hong Kong.

Shenzhen, with its trashy night life, profitable joint ventures, and greed-is-good philosophy, combines all that has succeeded and failed in China's reforms.

He landed a job at a firm that was transforming itself from a collectively owned enterprise into a joint stock company—one of the changes in China lauded by Western economists. What happened, however, is the old managers grabbed all the stock and took bank loans that were supposed to be for a furniture

factory and invested them in fly-by-night real estate schemes. The firm is now tottering on the brink of bankruptcy, He said, because the managers moved all its capital into their private bank accounts.

After quitting the firm a few years ago to join the Shenzhen Legal Daily as an editor, He makes about \$375 a month. The writer is married and has one child.

In recent weeks, He's book, which has not been translated into English, has been touted in the United States—but from a perspective that He argues is flawed. The dissident journalist Liu Binyan, who co-authored a New York Review of Books essay and has not been to China since the 1980s, used He's book to support the argument that the crushing of the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989 was the death knell of reform here. Which meant, Liu said, that economic reform was doomed to fail. Columnist Michael Kelly, writing in *The Washington Post's* opinion pages, said "China's Pitfall" showed US policy toward China is "dead wrong."

Kelly argues He's book proves the administration's premise—that China's reforms are slowly creating capitalism and democracy—is misguided. "The butchers of Beijing," Kelly wrote, "were also the looters of Beijing."

While such statements could affect He's freedom to work, that's not the only reason she objects. "Anyone who thinks that China had a choice about reforming doesn't understand the situation here," she says.

"What I am saying is that now we have gotten to the point where we have to look at what has happened, to take stock and to see what kind of society we have created. This is not a book about US-China relations. This is not a book that aims to sweep away all that has been accomplished in that has changed my life."

He changed my life, she says, 20 years to negate it all, like many dissidents want to do. I know that I can't stop it from being used as a political tract—just like I can't stop it from being pirated—but that is not why I wrote it. And I think that is not why many people are reading it. The people reading it include China's top leaders. Indeed, the only organization

that reportedly has banned members from buying it is the People's Liberation Army, possibly because the army has serious corruption and smuggling problems. But throughout the Communist Party and the government, the book has become very popular.

In August, He, who has never been a member of the party, was invited to Beijing to speak to its Central Commission for Discipline Inspection on corruption. "They said, We want to treat you like one of our own, say anything you want. Speak the truth," she recalls.

"So I did." He says, her fame has made life "pretty miserable these days." "I've had to change my phone number at home three times, and still people find it. They pay off the operator," she says. "I've changed my house number twice. It's ridiculous. I've moved out of my house into an office. I feel like I'm living in a fishbowl!" Still, she is writing. "Oh, the next book is going to be even worse," she predicts with a mischievous smile.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

The French Cultural Centre presents
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thanks to prompt
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JORDAN

WEEK

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

The latest mass re-development

■ The Housing and Urban Development Corporation is on the move again. It is now embarking on plans to reorganize 27 housing conglomerations in Amman, Russeifa and Zarqa. Director-General of the Corporation, Youssef Hayasat, says that the aim is to re-develop and reorganize these areas, especially the ones which were built randomly. Some of the areas are Wadi Al Hadadi, Wadi Abdoun, Safah Al Hashimi, Al Tafelieh neighborhood, Al Misdar, Al Pakistani neighborhood, and Al Misharfi. Also, there are in addition, 13 camps in the Kingdom that would need reorganization. Al Hayasat expects the works to last for three years. Such reorganization and redevelopment will require demolition, although Hayasat says his Corporation will only demolish as a last resort, and that accommodation will be found for those whose houses fall within these areas. In this respect, he also spoke of compensation but wouldn't be drawn into specifics.

Embassy in Kuwait

■ People said it was always likely to happen. Minister of Information, Nasser Jouda, has said that he has it on good authority that the Jordanian embassy in Kuwait, closed since the last Gulf War, will be reopening again. He did not say when, but it is expected to happen sometime at the end of the year.

Press

■ Is this the beginning of a new climate between the press and the Press and Publications Department (PPD)? The new director of the PPD, Isad Qattan, said the government has dropped 21 law cases against the press. He added that a further 31 cases against journalists were currently going through the courts. However, there are still cases against the press, which have been brought about by private individuals, and it seems that the government wants to go further than that. It is now trying to give the Jordan Press Association more power to control the profession. Earlier this week, Qattan transferred the first case of its kind to the JPA. The government says that case involves "professional journalism." The normal practice in the past was to transfer such cases to the courts.

Honor killing

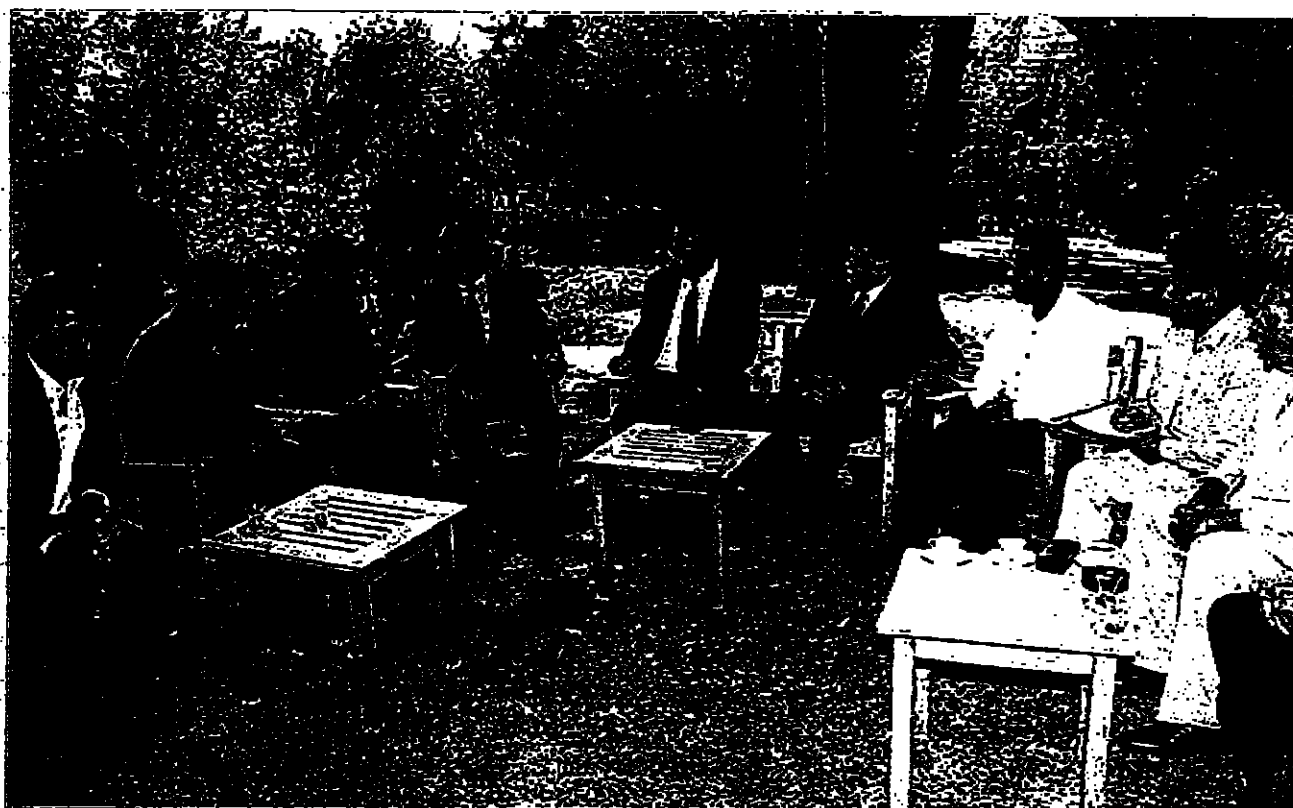
■ A father stabbed his daughter to death, and then surrendered himself and the murder weapon to the Zarqa Court. The police rushed to scene of the crime, but the girl died on the way to hospital. The father told police that he killed his daughter to "cleanse his honor."

Poverty

■ Revealing figures are provided on the poverty front by Minister of Social Development Mohammad Kheir Mamsar. He said that JD 16 million was provided to 35,000 families by his Ministry last year. He added that the poverty trap is likely to increase to 50,000 families by next year. Dr Mamsar said the Ministry now classifies poverty into 11 categories, and added that figures for those with limited income are increasing. What is disturbing is that the middle classes are slowly adding to the figures for those with limited income. He added that there are currently 300 villages (with a population total of 300,000) and 13 camps (population of total of 180,000) that can be classed as living in poverty.

Hebrew!

■ Jordan Television is to start broadcasting in Hebrew. In previous years, the television station had put on a short news bulletin in Hebrew. The aim this time is to expand its program cycle to include political, cultural and economic programs. JTV officials say the aim is to help Israelis better understand their Arab neighbors.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received at the Royal Court a delegation from the Municipality of Um Al Fahem, who arrived in Jordan on Monday to brief the Prince on the recent developments after the Israeli authorities confiscated lands in the town. The Prince reiterated Jordan's stance of rejecting the policy of land confiscation and stressed the need to respect the rights of all, regardless of religion, origin and sex. Um Al Fahem mayor, Raed Salah referred to the far-reaching effects of confiscating lands, pointing out that it is targeted at building more settlements. The area of Um Al Fahem has shrunk from 120,000 dunams to just 23,000, because of the Israeli policy of land confiscation.

Rote learning in schools maybe getting the push

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

AT SEVEN O'clock in the morning you see them heading to their schools, boys and girls of all ages, talking and laughing in the streets and in the school backyards.

But the moment they enter their classrooms everything changes. Depressed faces and tied legs can't move without permission. Many call it discipline, but an equal number describe it as an interference with freedom.

"The classroom is my nightmare, and I want to get rid of it," complained one of the students bitterly. "I begged my father not to send me to school, but when he refused I ran away," said Khalid, a 14-year-old, who was punished by his father when he played truant. "Despite the fact that some of the teachers treat us like animals—by beating us—I've decided to study, just to please my father and to quickly finish the rest of the school years," Khalid added.

The reason for this hatred of school can be attributed to the current methods of education, which ignores the pupil's ability and creativity. A typical school day begins with a teacher giving a brief explanation of the lesson, followed by an order to memorize the lesson for the next day, exactly in the same way as he explained it. "I don't want any mistakes. Everyone who doesn't learn it by heart, will be punished," the teacher might add.

This is what usually takes place in most of our schools. Old fashion teaching methods which consider rote learning as the only successful way to deliver information. There is no consideration of the abilities and differences between students.

A short survey was carried out in Zarqa two weeks ago focusing on the various methods of teaching, and their evaluation. After noticeable efforts by two social psychologists at the Family Guidance and Awareness Center (FGAC), a comprehensive study eventually came to light.

Mousa Omoush and I distributed the opinion polls to almost four schools and received interesting results,



Pupils outside one of the schools in Amman

said Muna Derbas, one of the social psychologists.

The two researchers faced a number of obstacles in completing their work, since some schools refused to cooperate with them. "We found out that 39 percent of our sample study suffered from school related problems, and most of the students considered their teachers as their main problem," Derbas elaborated.

Problems in the educational process include techniques of teaching that some of the instructors follow. This is made worse by the lack of cooperation between headmasters and headmistresses, who are unable to convince teachers to change their methods.

"Students complain of a lack of dialogue between them and their teachers, whom they are required to address with respect," Derbas added, "and many of the students said they have been severely punished, physically, after any delinquency that goes against the pedagogical process."

Education in Jordan has been based for a long time on the old methods of teaching. Old rote learning methods which might have been accepted in days gone past are no longer appropriate today. With the revolution in technology, education must change to meet society's growing needs.

"The objective of the survey was to focus on the conditions

of students inside our educational institutions. It also tried to convey these results to two responsible parties—the Ministry of Education and parents," Derbas explained.

Furthermore, the study identified another problem. Students on the whole refused to consult the school counselors, because they said the advisor would have the same approach as the teachers.

"The old method is based on the rule of law. The teacher bears all responsibility, whilst the student is just an inactive receiver," said Dr. Mahmud Maassad, head of the education section in the Ministry of Education.

However, things are changing slowly, since the National Pedagogical Conference which

took place in 1989.

"The curriculums are being revised every year, to meet with the latest developments all around the world," Maassad told *The Star*, "and the schools are benefiting from the introduction of laboratories and projectors, as well as more field trips to give students a wider perspective."

Regular meetings with teachers and headmasters, to inform them of the up to date methods in the classroom, is another recommendation of the report.

Furthermore, government schools are trying to catch up with private schools. The introduction of the Internet service in some government schools—an enriching educational tool—is a positive step forward. ■

Press cocktail

Edited by Ibtihal Ahmed

The Arab dream

■ Earlier this month Arab artists and actors gathered in Lebanon to give their support to the "Arab Dream Operetta." We should stop and ask ourselves if this operetta going to be just a song that will be remembered for its musical standards or is it going to really make a difference? Jordanian columnists had different views about this issue.

Dr Abdallah Al Khateeb in *Ad Dustour* says the ordinary Arab citizen has offered all he owns to support Arab unity. Al Khateeb used the character of Abu Saber (the restrained and patient one) to talk about the ordinary Arab citizen. After watching the "Arab Dream Operetta," Abu Saber starts mourning the Arab nation, because we no longer have the strength and willpower to turn our dreams into reality.

The Operetta reminds us of our hopes, potentials and hidden strengths, which we have to bring out to cope with the savagery of this century, otherwise we will be crushed and forgotten. Al Khateeb wonders about our lack of strength and wants to know who is responsible for its loss. He also wonders about the teachings of our ancestors, who always taught us that being weak and humble does not get us anywhere. We should keep alive their ideas by realizing that what was taken by force can only be retrieved by force. This is not the case in our present society, for we have adapted well to the unjust and humiliating treatment of others.

Abu Saber wonders about our ability to stand aside while the rights of other Arab nations are being violated, like the occupation of Palestine, the threatening of Syria, the killing of Iraq, the massacres in Algeria and wars in Somalia, Yemen and Sudan.

The Operetta tells us we need to be united, for we have the necessary elements for this unity, and we should learn some lessons from the experiences of other nations who found common ground amongst themselves, and are well on the way to achieving complete unity even though they do not share the same language. Like Europe, for example, which is trying its best to become one nation.

Rihab Al Qosini in *Al Rai*, on the other hand, sees the "Arab Dream Operetta" as a fresh and original musical piece, a stark contrast to the low and popular wave of songs which swept the Arab world over the past two decades. Al Qosini compared that type of music—which took teenagers by a storm—to a stream of contaminated water. That kind of popular music spreads despotic styles and promotes deceitful appearances. The object of this music is to have more material gains.

The "Arab Dream Operetta," on the other hand, has a higher purpose. The contents of the songs fills us with feelings of Arab nationalism. It awakens our sleepy dreams and revives our hopes. The operetta—in its different Arabic dialects—invokes feelings which have been long forgotten by Arabs. It urges us to be daring, strong, aggressive and challenging. It calls for Arab unity, because we all share the same destiny and fate.

Shareif Samhan of *Al Arab Al Yawm* says the Arab Dream will not go beyond a song that entertains people. Any attempt to make its vision a reality will never see the light of day, for believe it or not, there are local differences between Arabs! Indeed, Arabs are receiving the same treatment as foreigners do. Samhan drew this conclusion from his own personal experience. On a visit to Jerash with a fellow journalist from Iraq, the Iraqi was refused entry to the ancient city unless he paid the admission fee of JD 5, the standard fee for foreigners. The funny thing is, Samhan says, this refusal was made while the "Arab Dream Operetta" was playing in the distance, in stereo. Samhan wonders if we can really start implementing the words of the song, or are they just another dream.

The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Online

<http://star.arabia.com>

Voices in the Wilderness seek to avert catastrophe in Iraq

Tala Abu Taha
Star Staff Writer

DEFYING THE eight-year-old sanctions imposed on Iraq, Voices in the Wilderness—a group of US and British volunteers—are making frequent trips to Iraq, to deliver medical supplies for its people. They were in Amman this week, having just returned from Baghdad.

By undertaking these tasks, the group members are violating US Federal Law, and could face a 12-year jail sentence, a million-dollar fine, and a US\$ 250,000 administrative penalty. The charity organization was formed in the US in 1996, and campaigns for an end to economic sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Michael Gabriel, Heather Crone, David Sylvester, Kelly Gurfield and Bert Sacks were the five-member group which visited Iraq last week, bringing vital medicines to the children there. This was the 16th delegation to visit Iraq. Four of the five members come from Seattle, Washington, whilst David Sylvester resides in the San Francisco Bay area.

The group visited a number of hospitals, schools and families in Iraq, and the sights they saw left them in no doubt of the severe human consequences the UN economic sanctions are having on the people of Iraq.



Michale Gabriel, a novelist and a citizen diplomat, recounts being present at the birth of a child in Baghdad.

"When I first entered the hospital my heart sunk, as everywhere I looked, there were dirty gloves, infection, and preventable deaths. My heart has become like a stone," she told *The Star*.

Peace activist Heather Crone

wrong for nations to engage in policies that specifically deprive civilians "access to basic medical care."

"It is an entirely preventable human catastrophe, and one that will leave generations demanding to know why it was allowed to happen," said David Sylvester, a teacher and a writer in Voices in the Wilderness. Bert Sacks, the leader of the delegation, who is on his third trip to Iraq, said that "4,000 years ago Hamurabi—the law-giver of Babylon—said it was wrong to punish the son if the father is the wrong-doer."

"Yet the United States and the United Nations are willing to punish the children of Iraq—most of whom were not even born in 1990—for something they have not done," Sacks continued. The group appeals to the senses of the "good" American people to join their campaign. They said they will continue to violate the US Federal Law, until the Iraqi sanctions are lifted, suggesting that the sanctions are having the same effect as the Hiroshima bomb did on the Japanese people. They also noticed that during the Gulf War, United States bombers destroyed most of Iraq's electrical plants and water-treatment facilities.

The delegation is returning to the US, but new members are due to arrive in Iraq to continue their tireless campaign to end the UN sanctions. ■

Tourism gets the green light

Lubna Khader
Star Staff Writer

TOURISM IN Jordan has gone through many ups and downs over the past few months.

"The number of tourists decreased by 13 percent between the months of February and May," said Minister of Tourism Aqel Beltaji. He attributed this to the impending confrontation between Iraq and the United Nations. However, he pointed out that since the middle of September, the number of tourists rose by 13 percent.

Mr Beltaji held a press conference this week to discuss his recent visits to France and the United States. The Minister said that his visits were successful, and that there is now close

cooperation between Jordan and France, especially in archaeological and tourist sites, and the promotion of trade and marketing exhibitions. Mr Beltaji said that both the Jordanian and the French sides would be meeting every six months to review the progress that has been made.

"We concentrated on ways of promoting Jordan in France, and on what were the best methods of attracting tourists," the Minister said. "We have seen—in the space of one year—a vast improvement in the provision of our tourist services." He said that tourism services have vastly improved in relation to last year, and that the basic infrastructure has been completed," he added.

The Minister confirmed that the French company, Accor,



Beltaji at a press conference

will transfer Jordanian debt into tourist activities in Wadi Mousa, the Dead Sea and Ma'an, and that the developments are due to start next month.

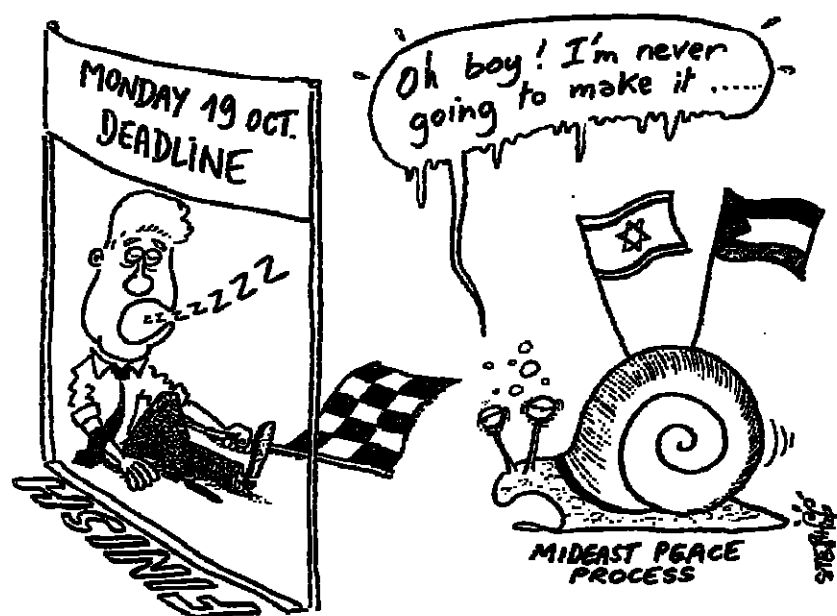
Mr Beltaji also discussed his trip to the US, especially regarding the Jordanian participation in the Conference of American Tours and Travel Agencies.

"This is one of the most important travel venues in North America, and Jordan will

be fully participating in the event next year, on top of our other international venues," the Minister added.

There is a great potential from the American market. In 1997, the number of American tourists that visited Jordan was around 86,000, and the figure is expected to rise to 100,000 next year.

The Minister also confirmed that his budget for next year would be JD 5,200,000. ■



Our Say...

King asserts his role in peace talks

MAJESTY KING Hussein's arrival at Wye Plantation this week to join Palestinian and Israeli leaders in their arduous negotiations to get the Middle East peace process moving has given the beleaguered talks a much needed boost. The King, who is still being treated in a US hospital, has never been a person to shy away from responsibility, especially if it involved a noble and cherished objective such as a just peace in the Middle East. His wisdom, deep understanding of the issues, and the fact that he is trusted by all parties concerned, should offer the negotiators fresh ideas to conclude a deal.

The Palestinians, in particular, should be relieved that King Hussein has once again intervened to rescue the talks. It has taken many months of bitter arguing and frustration for the parties to commit to this historic meeting in Wye Plantation. There is much at stake and a failure will undoubtedly throw the entire region into the eye of a violent storm.

The Americans know very well the unique role that King Hussein can play in salvaging the talks. He has done so many times, most notably in 1997 when the Palestinian and Israelis were trying to reach a deal over Hebron. The Jordanian mediation saved the day. It says a lot about Jordan's importance to the entire peace process. It's commitment to a just and lasting peace in the region is beyond question. But most importantly, it's support for the Palestinians comes a time when the Palestinian leadership finds itself alone in the face of a hawkish and belligerent Israeli government.

It is too early to determine if the parties will listen to the voice of reason and move forward in resolving the issues at hand. The weight of responsibility now falls on the Israelis, who seem to hold most of the cards. The Palestinians have come a long way and made important concessions. It is not fair, nor logical, to ask President Arafat to make additional compromises.

The Palestinian people have reached a stage where their faith in the entire process is about to dissipate. Arafat's failure to win an honorable deal at Wye Plantation will not automatically mean a victory for Israel. Israel too stands to lose a lot if the talks fail and a dead-end is reached.

This is probably what King Hussein will be telling the parties at Wye Plantation. He has warned time and again of an impending catastrophe if the peace process falters and people lose hope in it.

The Israeli leadership must make use of this opportunity to shed away its rejectionist rhetoric and move towards a deal that will give the Palestinians their legitimate rights. This is the only guarantor of a lasting and honorable peace.



Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi is surrounded by the media after he arrives in Amman on 19 October to recover from a hip operation he had undergone early last July. Gaddafi will stay in the southwestern Tunisian city of Tozeur during his visit.

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Jordanian Prisoners under the spotlight

Stronger diplomatic efforts needed

AMMAN (Star)—The issue of Jordanian prisoners abroad had seemingly been long forgotten. That was the case a few weeks ago, but thanks to the comments of Syrian Defence Minister Mustapha Tlass—who accused Jordan of not fulfilling its role in the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War—the issue is back on the agenda.

Tlass' comments started a war of words between the two countries, and the only good thing to come out of the unfortunate episode was the refocusing on the issue of Jordanian prisoners.

Suddenly, the prisoners became the talk of town. Parliament, the civil institutions, the media, and the man on the street began to discuss the issue of Jordanian prisoners abroad, as if it was something new—which of course it wasn't.

The statistics were freely handed out. We were told that the number of Jordanian prisoners held in jails in Syria is around 1000, although the figures provided by the Foreign Ministry put it at a slightly lower figure of 742 and later on, they were lowered to 500.

A wide margin in figures you may say, but the important thing is that they are out in the open. Previously, they were downplayed or put under wraps. Now for that, we know that there are Jordanian prisoners abroad, it would be a major crime to push the matter under the carpet again.

The Foreign Ministry is to be commended for coming out into the open at long last, and revealing that the number of Jordanians under arrest around the world is 1,400. Speaking on the Arabic television program *Amman Basaraha* (Frankly From Amman), Abdel Al Hameed Al Nasser, head of the Consular Section in the Foreign

Ministry, even broke the figures down to individual countries around the world.

There has always been Jordanian

ventions. This is something that all countries in the world have to contend with, when dealing in the murky waters of international diplomacy.

But even within this seemingly international minefield, and in an effort not to rock the boat of bilateral relations, there are nevertheless extensive side alleys to explore. Other countries, for example, have raised hell whenever any of their nationals is embroiled in cross-border disputes.

Basically, what Mr Nasser said is that in Jordan, 'we like to do things differently', and prefer the 'quite diplomatic approach'. There is nothing wrong with that, so long as it yields effective results. In most countries it probably does, and there appears to be various negotiations between our embassies abroad with countries holding Jordanians in prison.

The cynic may argue that the quite diplomatic approach obviously does not work, as there are 1400 Jordanian prisoners abroad.

What we do have is the reassurance that the Foreign Ministry and the Jordanian embassies abroad are following up on the case of prisoners.

Syria is included among these countries. Files and names have been constantly presented to the Syrian authorities. That is the easy bit, getting a response has proven to be a lot harder. So, the quest continues as it were.

Now, however, the cat is out of the bag, and not unexpectedly, it is not very happy. Jordanian diplomatic efforts should be redoubled to exert pressure on all countries holding Jordanians in custody.

Eye on Jordan



prisoners abroad, especially in Syria. Some of those in that country have been locked up for the last 20 years. It is no use now crying over spilt milk and accusing the former governments of negligence. The time for action is now.

While the government has known all along that there are Jordanian prisoners abroad, it has been restricted by diplomatic protocol and international con-

ventions. This is something that all countries in the world have to contend with, when dealing in the murky waters of international diplomacy.

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Asia's great statesman

Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew

Peter Montagnon reviews the controversial figure behind the success of Singapore

WHEN HE was a boy, recounts Lee Kuan Yew in this first volume of his memoirs, Billy Bunter stories were among his favourite reading. It is a surprising admission for the man who subsequently became one of Asia's greatest statesmen admired, feared and loathed in almost equal measure.

For Billy Bunter, the lazy, gluttonous wimp of pre-war children's fiction, had none of the virtues that drove Lee to create in Singapore one of the richest societies in the world. This autobiography confirms Lee, former prime minister of Singapore and still a cabinet minister, is of a different stamp: ruthless, single-minded, obsessed with detail and unsentimental in his approach to politics, but extraordinarily clear-sighted and prodigiously energetic. All these qualities are strikingly evident in his description of the events that led up to the expulsion of Singapore from the Malaysian federation in 1965.

Lee says one of the reasons that led him to write the book is to explain to younger Singaporeans, with no memory of the turmoil of those early years, how their country came into being and how it developed. But this is more than just a history textbook. The appeal to a wider audience lies in more than the rare description from a Singaporean point of view of life

under the Japanese occupation. The Singapore Story is revealing for the insights it gives into the character of a man described by George Bush as "one of the brightest, ablest men I have ever met." Above all, it lifts the lid on the calculating way he was able to control the political process, at least inside Singapore itself.

In his grander objective, the inclusion of Singapore in a non-racial Malaysian federation, of course, he failed. From his early days, he believed the communists, with their strong following among the non-English speaking Chinese community, would quickly seize control of an independent Singapore. Independence within the Malaysian federation was the only way, he believed, of keeping the communists out.

But while in two years of federation he was able to neutralise the communists and their sinister clandestine leader, Fang Chuan Pi, he came up against an immovable obstacle in the form of Malay nationalism. Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Malaysian leader, feared Lee's political activity in Malaysia would lead to dominance of the economically more dynamic Chinese over the Malay population. There simply was not room for two of them.

It was an emotional moment when the rift became final in 1965. Lee broke down in front of the television cameras and had to break off a press conference while he composed himself. It was



Lee Kuan Yew

partly because his dream had collapsed, but also because of his awareness of how difficult it would be for Singapore to go it alone. Not only was it a tiny country, dependent on its hostile northern neighbour even for water. Its other neighbour, Indonesia, was in ferment, and violence showed signs of spreading.

The sense of having one's back against the wall has been a driving force behind Singapore ever since. In

showing how Singapore had to go it alone, Lee's book explains why—from a Singaporean point of view. One wonders whether some of the complaints were a result of him being so difficult to pin down—it could take four days of eating, drinking and golfing before he would come to the point.

There is a condescension and abrasiveness in his approach that the Tunku evidently found insufferable at times. When at one stage Lee made a speech in Malay to the Malaysian parliament, the Tunku suggested irritably that Lee "speaks Malay better than I do."

But if Lee was unforgiving with his enemies, he was equally so with himself. While trying to suggest he was not a swot, he admits to being horrified after his first year at Raffles College to discover that he had not come first in every subject. Later, as a political campaigner making an almost continual series of radio broadcasts in three separate languages, he imposed on himself a schedule so demanding that he had to lie down for a rest on the studio floor between recording sessions. Had been kinder on himself, Lee might also have got on better with those around him. No doubt he would see it differently. Had he been soft, Singapore would never have become the success it is today.

The view of Laheur as a hostage to regional circumstances does not improve his standing, compared to his predecessors, but will circumstances change for the better? Will he prove to be independently minded, and take his own initiatives? This questions can only be left to the future.

In addition, one finds it very difficult to see how the rule of law can be applied. This surely requires the condition of equality before the law, but unfortunately, the practice until recently has been that of equality above the law. To turn the tables on the circumstances will require plenty of effort and charisma. The fear is that the social composition of the country may not allow this, and prove to be less cooperative than expected, especially if it encroaches upon the basic tenets of sectarianism, which permeates the whole mosaic of Lebanese society.

Financial Times Syndication

Middle East Beat by Khairi Janbek New President

THE ELECTION of General Lahoud as the new President of Lebanon, has been met with much comfort and satisfaction, officially and on the popular level.

The general has an excellent reputation as a man untainted by the long civil war, is above suspicion in matters of corruption, and has played the major part in re-establishing the unity of the Lebanese Army and restoring its military discipline after having been divided for many a year by ideology and religion.

His advent to power, will undoubtedly increase the confidence of our brethren in Lebanon for a better future. The task of the general is not easy, for nothing is easy in Lebanese affair. Nevertheless, he is inheriting the mantle of the presidency, at a time when Lebanon is in revival, and he should not take for granted the difficulties faced by previous presidencies, which had to contend with the civil war and its consequences.

Perhaps, here lies the difficulty for Lahoud. In the years of war and strife, the ultimate aim was usually to survive with the bare minimum, but now that the Lebanese people are full of expectation and want to see major changes in the way the country is run. No miracle is expected, but at least a will-backed up by determination—may prove to be the required recipe to keep the country together.

He is expected to muster up enough support with his slogan of the rule of law. His critics have limited their remarks to the circumstances in which he has been elected, preferring to criticise the elected-term instead.

Reference has been made to the fact that the final decision had to be made in Damascus, with the approval of Syrian President Assad, rather than from the representatives of the Lebanese Parliament. Others misgivings have been expressed regarding his status as a military man, sighting the problems experienced in the past with President Shihab—coined Shihabism—during which the military dominated the political system.

As a military commander and unifier of the Lebanese Army, one of the most important tasks awaiting him when he takes over the Presidency next month, is to ensure accountability in public affairs. He will have to eliminate the mentality of fiefdoms, and restore the Decorum to the title of state. Naturally, he will face opposition from some quarters, for the definition of a state is not limited to the capital, but to the whole country.

The Israeli occupation in the South is another possible stumbling block in his plans to unify the country, and unfortunately, the presence of fraternal Syrian troops in the Bekaa does take the initiative from our hands.

The view of Lahoud as a hostage to regional circumstances does not improve his standing, compared to his predecessors, but will circumstances change for the better? Will he prove to be independently minded, and take his own initiatives? This questions can only be left to the future.

In addition, one finds it very difficult to see how the rule of law can be applied. This surely requires the condition of equality before the law, but unfortunately, the practice until recently has been that of equality above the law. To turn the tables on the circumstances will require plenty of effort and charisma. The fear is that the social composition of the country may not allow this, and prove to be less cooperative than expected, especially if it encroaches upon the basic tenets of sectarianism, which permeates the whole mosaic of Lebanese society.

Business scene

■ The overall handling and delivery operations at Aqaba port recorded a rise of 6% during the first nine months this year. This is attributed to a 23% increase in the size of imports, which rose from 3,325,270 tons last year to 4,091,611 tons this year. As for the number of imported and exported containers, the port also showed a five per cent growth, rising from 119,422 to 122,802 in the first nine months of this year.

■ Under the auspices of Amman Mayor, Nidal Al Hadeed, and in the presence of a number of officials, deputies, senators and senior business persons, the cornerstone was laid at the Industrial City at Al Rajel, in east Amman. Established by the Specialized Investment Co., the industrial city will provide a golden opportunity for anyone interested in investment, in an environment distinguished with the basic services at an affordable cost. The city extends over 300,000 square meters, and is the biggest industrial complex ever established by the private sector in Jordan.

■ The total of Jordanian exports to the Arab countries reached JD 256 million at the end of June this year, down from the figure of JD 320 million recorded the same time last year. The statistics from the Central Bank of Jordan, show that JD 91 million worth of exports was in foodstuffs, including JD 46 million in vegetables. A further JD 3 million went in raw materials, and JD 87 million was in the form of chemicals. The lion share of Jordanian exports went to Arab countries, with the Asian and the European Union the next largest markets. Meanwhile, imports from Arab countries totaled JD 316 million during the same period. Total imports reached JD 1,572 billion, the majority of which came from the European Union. The Asian and Arab markets were next in importance.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 23 October

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US\$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
Sfr	0.4801	0.4825
FFr	0.1227	0.1233
Yen	0.5624	0.5652
Dkr	0.3667	0.3685
Lit	0.0419	0.0421

Privatization continues to create controversy

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

THE GOVERNMENT'S privatization policy is back in the headlines again, following the Securities Commission decision to suspend dealing in Jordan Cement Factories (JCF) shares at Amman Financial Market.

Economic analysts say the move paves the way for the Government to sell its 33 percent stake in the company, in line with its controversial strategy of selling shares in public institutions.

The Government has made it clear all along that it plans to privatize many public organizations, with the national airline Royal Jordanian, RJ (Alia) and Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) heading the list. The recent restructuring of RJ made the headlines, because analysts claimed it was all part of a longer term plan to put the airline back on a commercial basis, settle some of its debts, before offering its shares to a strategic partner. The same reasoning has been leveled at JTC, which is currently doing its best to introduce new, advanced technologies and enhance the cellular telephone service.

Launched nearly three years ago, the so called "privatization" policy has been a major battleground between the government on the one side, and the Lower House deputies and economic experts on the other.

The Government has insisted that all its privatization plans are based upon prudent and detailed studies, whilst the opponents say the selling off of profitable corporations—one that contribute greatly to the state coffers—is a national crime. The opposition also disapproves of foreign investors or multinational entrepreneurs having total control over the national institutions, as they will ultimately be guided by profit making over everything else.

It would seem that officials are intent on speeding up the process of privatization, justifying the trend as a must, stressing that the strategic partners are a prerequisite which will compensate for the lack of qualified expertise, large capital sums and up to date technology. The counter argument offered by some deputies and economic experts is that their is Jordanian capital available, but that it is all abroad and needs to be coaxed back home. They claim that the human resources are also present, but that the Government is adamant in preferring foreign expertise.



Ammaria



Obeidat

The decision on the JCF shows that the Government is prepared to pursue its privatization policy regardless of the flak it is taking. Shares in JCF fell sharply, recording their lowest level for more than four years, currently standing at JD 1.8 per share compared to the high of

JD 4.4 in June 1997. The company has about 43,700 shareholders, and looks to be heading for recorded profits of around 3 million for the first half of this year.

The well-known academic Dr Mohammad Obeidat, the head of the Marketing Department at the University of Jordan, commented on the process of privatization, and stressed that, "This issue must be planned accurately, and as an academic, I am afraid that the present program is being embarked on with undue haste, which is interfering with the chances of successful privatization."

"I also have my doubts," he added, "as to whether the chosen institutions have the necessary qualified management teams, capable of leading the program to a suc-

cessful outcome."

Dr Obeidat added, "When privatizing, some basic elements need to be recognized. Like maintaining the state's sovereignty over the institution, and the opinions of those who work in the organization—both the employer and employee—should be taken into account. The consumer should also have a say, because they are the ones who are ultimately affected when the prices of the goods or service goes up."

Deputies also have expressed their concern at the pace of the privatization program. Dr Nazih Ammaria, told *The Star* that, "We are not against the process in principle, but what we do oppose is the methodology being used, in transforming the ownership of corporations and evaluating their assets."

Known for his tough opposition to the Government, Ammaria stressed that, "It is criminal that the powers that be are allowing foreign investors to own 100 percent shares in some of the Kingdom's investment enterprises. The decision is unfair and oppressive."

Dr Ammaria reminded *The Star* that, "Three years ago, I opposed the governmental decision to limit the sale of shares in the Jordan Hotels Company to selling stakes of 600,000 shares or more, which meant that a wide spectrum of citizens of medium size incomes were denied the right to buy shares in the company. It is our responsibility as deputies and your mission as press to ensure that any privatization deal is above the table, and benefits the whole of the Kingdom, not just the chosen few."

"The Asian financial market crisis," Dr Ammaria added, "should serve as a timely reminder to all those who are keen on welcoming heavy foreign investments into the Kingdom's public institutions. You expose yourself to the risk that the foreign investors will withdraw their capital, and leave you to pick up the pieces."

Industrial partnership a way to face worldwide crisis, official argue

THE CHALLENGES facing the industrial sector in Jordan and securing finance for investments were among other issues put under the spotlight during a training course opened at the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centers Company (JEDCO). Sponsored by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in cooperation with Arab Potash Co. and the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization. It highlighted the need to deal with problems facing the industrial investment and development, among which finance and the shortage of trained human resources are considered key players in such a process. Speaking on this issue, the secretary general at the Ministry of Industry, Dr Mohammad Al Halayka, stressed that industrial development in any country requires reinforced relations between industrial projects on the local level, and sound cooperation on the regional and international arenas. Referring to the challenges awaiting this vital sector, Dr Ahmad Al Hindawi, director of the Industrial Development Department at the Ministry said that the ministry

is keen to prepare local manufacturers for the globalization era, by embarking on a national industrial plan and making efforts to approve legislation that can help to create an encouraging environment for investment.

The Jordanian pharmaceutical industry takes practical steps

IN PREPARATION for the Euro-Jordanian Association Agreement and the imminent accession to WTO, the pharmaceutical industry in Jordan has embarked on a comprehensive and integrated program to qualify the industry in new export markets, notably the European Union. To achieve this goal, along with other formidable tasks that lay ahead, the first workshop commenced this week, which leads a continuation to previous ones that were held in the past. This workshop is one of six, which will take place over a two-year period. The workshop is dedicated to train and drill the relevant people of the pharmaceutical industry on regulatory matters, i.e. filing registration forms for generic pharmaceutical products, in an international perspective. On a parallel level, the inspection/auditing of Jordanian pharmaceutical manufacturing plants will be launched at the beginning of November and will last for two years. The program aims at assessing the existing facilities as well as examining the documentation, according to the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), that will give an opportunity to identify the gaps, since they exist and to carry out the necessary upgrading.

This project is financed primarily by the Swedish Government, based on cost sharing with the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry. On behalf of the Jordanian Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, we express our deep gratitude and appreciation to the Swedish government for their support, and especially we extend our gratitude to the Ambassador and the Consul of Sweden for their hard efforts in bringing this project to materialization.

In Brazil, high times turn to hard times

To prevent the economic and currency meltdowns seen in Russia, Indonesia and Thailand, the Brazilian government has prescribed bitter medicine, implementing massive spending cuts and pushing central bank interest rates to 49.75 percent

By Anthony Faiola

RIO DE JANEIRO—A year ago, the da Silva family was full of hope. As Brazil boomed under free-market reforms, brothers Wagner da Silva, 21, and Alessandro da Silva, 22, landed jobs in a glass factory at \$500 a month—enough to buy their mother a new stereo system. Their father was doing even better stocking shelves in a retail store.

But then, as with millions of other families in Latin America's largest nation, the global economic ax fell hard on the da Silvas, who live in

an inland shantytown in this sprawling tropical metropolis. Recent government measures to battle the crisis and protect the currency from devaluation put the brakes on the economy and sent unemployment soaring. Wagner and Alessandro were fired three months ago. Their father was laid off a month later.

Now, as the brothers spend their days in futile interviews and hours-long job lines, their mother has become the only breadwinner, earning minimum wage on a 3:30 a.m. shift cleaning hospital rooms. As the government forced up interest rates to protect the currency, the family's payments went way up on their stereo system—bought on credit extended to the poor for the first time under Brazil's free-market reforms.

But the hike in interest rates, defaults on consumer credit have soared as debtors are overwhelmed by higher payments on adjustable-rate loans. In Rio de Janeiro alone, almost one in five residents has defaulted on payments for cars, television sets and other consumer goods, according to the Rio Merchants Association.

"I feel disgraced—for me and my family," said Rubens da Silva, 70, a retiree who is not related to Wagner and Alessandro, after walking out of a Rio debt-restructuring office in a daze. Da Silva had just been informed that his name had been added to the city's growing debtors' list because of his failure to meet payments on new kitchen appliances after his interest rate shot from 8 to 13 percent three months ago.

"Look at this," said da Silva, tears streaking his face as he took out a worn worker's I.D. card. "I was a captain in the fire department. A captain! I was always honorable. And now look at me, in shame. I wish I had never bought (the appliances). It's only brought me misery. I'm a very sad man."

recession. More harsh news is expected Tuesday, when newly reelected President Fernando Henrique Cardoso will likely announce new austerity measures to renew investor confidence in the world's ninth largest economy. Thus far, Cardoso's hard decisions have been applauded by international economists, who have the country under a microscope for fear of what a Brazilian collapse could mean to the global economy.

But the ones paying the price now are the Brazilian people. According to government statistics, unemployment is currently at 8.2 percent, up from 6.3 percent just 12 months ago; labor unions say the figure is 18 percent in Brazil's largest cities. With the hike in interest rates, defaults on consumer credit have soared as debtors are overwhelmed by higher payments on adjustable-rate loans. In Rio de Janeiro alone, almost one in five residents has defaulted on payments for cars, television sets and other consumer goods, according to the Rio Merchants Association.

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Although it is small consolation for Brazilians, this kind of economic uncertainty is hardly novel. Before Cardoso in 1994 launched his Real Plan, which fixed the local

currency, the real, to the U.S. dollar to stabilize the economy, Brazil was wracked by decades of economic volatility. Hyperinflation was so bad that the price of goods would double in the time it took for workers to cash their paychecks. From 1983 to 1993, Brazil had no fewer than nine separate economic plans—all of which ultimately fell apart.

Before the crisis hit, things seemed different with Cardoso, 67, whose free-market reforms have produced years of relative prosperity. Cardoso helped make Brazil the world's economic darling, luring more foreign investment than any developing nation except China through a series of massive privatizations. For many Brazilians, Cardoso seemed to be the man who would finally lead the world's fifth most populous nation—made up mostly of the very poor and very rich—to unleash its vast potential.

Even now, as that dream appears to be unraveling, there are many Brazilians who cling to Cardoso's promise on national television this month that this is only "a temporary crisis."

The question now is how long Brazilians will be willing to cope with a bad situation to preserve their free-market reforms. As the economy appears to be heading for a recession in 1999, consumer demand has dried up; forcing manufacturers and retailers into layoffs or temporary furloughs. Unemployed workers are finding it difficult if not impossible to find jobs.

"The job market is very tough right now, and that's not going to change quickly," said Carla Muniz, a job analyst for a Rio employment agency. Last October, she had 200 jobs and about 2,000 applicants to fill them. This October, her agency already has 4,000 applicants and fewer than 144 openings.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Two models pose for the media next to the new S-Type V6 Executive car launched by British car maker Jaguar at the Berlin Car show 20 October. The Berlin car show is open to the public until 25 October.

09.10.1998

Iraq sought Russian arms technology

By David Hoffman

MOSCOW—A delegation of top missile experts from Iraq went on a shopping trip to Russia in late 1994 and signed documents to acquire missile engines, technology and services despite the UN sanctions against Iraq and in violation of Russian export controls, according to results of a new investigation by Russian and American nonproliferation specialists.

The probe offers further evidence that Iraq carried out a clandestine effort to rearm after the 1991 Persian Gulf War and that Iraqi weapons builders turned to Russia's hard-hit military-industrial complex as a source of hardware and know-how about weapons of mass destruction.

Most of the items apparently were never delivered for several reasons: An initial shipment of missile guidance systems was intercepted in Amman by Jordanian authorities; a key middleman was later arrested in Baghdad by Iraqi authorities; and Russian security services may have interrupted the planned deals.

But the probe raises new questions about whether high-ranking Russian officials gave a green light to Iraqi officials for the items procurement inside Russia. A Russian criminal investigation was closed without any charges being brought.

The new information comes from a joint investigation carried out by the Center for Policy Studies in Russia, a non-proliferation group here headed by Vladimir Orlov, and the Center for Nonproliferation Studies, headed by William C. Potter, at the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California. Their findings are being published next week in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and were made available in advance to The Washington Post. According to the authors, the new study is based on their own interviews and on Russian, US and UN documents.

Orlov's group previously disclosed that the Iraqis used a Palestinian, Weaam Gharbiyeh, as a middleman to acquire more than 800 sophisticated gyroscopes for intercontinental ballistic missiles, which were shipped from Moscow in 1995. The sensitive devices, which keep missiles on target, had been removed from Russian submarine-launched ballistic missiles being destroyed under arms control treaties.

In addition to the gyroscopes, it was earlier disclosed separately that Iraq signed an agreement to buy a 5,000-liter fermentation vessel from Russia that could be used for developing biological weapons.

Russian officials have repeatedly denied that they breached the UN sanctions by selling arms to Iraq. After Rolf Ekeus, who then headed the UN Special Commission in charge of investigating Iraq's weapons programs, came to Moscow with detailed evidence in February 1996,

officials acknowledged that the gyroscopes had come from Russia, but insisted the government had not given approval.

The new investigation broadens the picture of Iraq's dealings in Russia. According to Orlov and Potter, Iraq was seeking parts and technology to build a new, more accurate, and possibly longer-range missile than it had possessed before. The Scud missiles that Iraq launched at Israel during the Gulf War are notoriously inaccurate.

The investigators said Gharbiyeh, the Palestinian middleman, was given his most lucrative offer in August 1994 from the Ibn Al Hay-

advanced technologies, and eager to work out specific offers as soon as possible, as long as payment was assured.

The investigators said one of the letters of intent was signed with the Scientific Production Association Energomash, a huge Soviet and later Russian producer of rocket engines based in Moscow. The company agreed to provide "complete technology transfer," they said, including production equipment for two types of liquid-fueled missile engines.

Energomash agreed to provide a complete rocket engine of four-ton thrust as well as design calculations, final design, and five complete sam-

pleting the deals, and returned to Baghdad in early 1995 where "he drafted new contracts with his Iraqi sponsors based on the November protocols." The contracts with the Karama company alone totaled more than \$65 million, they said.

They also recount how Gharbiyeh returned to Russia to purchase the gyroscopes from a missile destruction factory in Sergiyev Posad, a town north of Moscow. According to the authors, he went so far as to have the gyroscopes tested and certified at a special facility in Moscow. He then arranged for the export out of Moscow's lone international airport of 800 sensitive missile gyroscopes and accelerometers to Amman.

The gyroscopes were seized in November 1995 in Amman by Jordanian authorities acting on intelligence information from UN disarmament experts. The discovery of the gyroscopes was an early and significant indication that Iraq was attempting to acquire forbidden weapons during the UN disarmament inspections. Iraqi authorities later arrested Gharbiyeh in Baghdad after the defection to Jordan of Hussein Kamel Hassan Majeed, Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, who was later assassinated upon his return to Iraq. The reason for his arrest is unclear, and his whereabouts are unknown.

Orlov and Potter said not all the gyroscopes have been accounted for. The devices came from Russia's SS-N-18 missiles. Of the 800 components that arrived in Amman, 240 were strategic missile gyroscopes, and 240 were accelerometers. However, only 120 gyroscopes and 120 accelerometers were seized in Jordan, they said.

An additional 33 gyroscopes and 26 accelerometers were pulled out of the Tigris River in Baghdad by UN arms inspectors on 9 December 1995. "That means about 180 gyroscopes and accelerometers—enough for 30 missile guidance systems—are unaccounted for," they said. Orlov said many of the other missile items mentioned in the documents signed in Moscow were never delivered, because the plans were later interrupted by Russia's security services, or by Gharbiyeh's arrest in 1995.

The investigators again question—as Orlov has earlier—why the Russian criminal investigation of the case was narrow, focusing only on the gyroscopes, and not looking at Gharbiyeh's other activity. "Given the frequency of (Gharbiyeh's) visits to Russia and the extensive nature of his contacts and contracts with the Russian defense establishment," they concluded, "it is hard to imagine that the Russian authorities at some level were not aware of his activities beyond the gyroscope deal."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Fear of government reprisals chills Iran's press



President Khatami has been at the forefront in the introduction of greater press freedom in Iran.

By John Daniszewski

TEHRAN, Iran—Publisher Shabla Lahiji was at a book fair in western Iran when she noticed security people helping themselves to works that the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance had given her permission to publish.

"We didn't even know who they were. When we asked, they answered, 'Don't challenge,'" she recalled. "This is a sensitive time for all of us."

A climate of fear is running through editorial offices and publishing houses in Iran amid signs of a crackdown. It began with criticism by the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, that some newspapers were being used to weaken Islamic belief. Then came the arrests of four staff members at the country's most daring daily, *Tous*. Now Lahiji says that, one by one, she and others in the media have been warned: "Be careful."

After more than a year of relative freedom under Iran's moderate president, Mohammad Khatami, the hard-liners seem to have struck back. *Tous* remains closed. Its business director, Hamid Reza Jalaeipour, was released by authorities last week, but officials said he still faces investigation. The other three staff members remain in detention, their whereabouts and condition unknown. And before Jalaeipour's release, a senior Islamic judge had warned that the four staff members could face the death penalty as "mohareb," or "those who fight God."

For editors and publishers, the message is clear. Khatami, the architect of the liberalized press climate since he took power last year, has not raised strong protest, leading many to conclude that he feels powerless to oppose the crackdown.

Others argue that the situation is not so dire. Khatami's administration has surrendered, they say, in the case of a few publications that challenged Iran's system of government overseen by religious authority, but the trend toward more freedom remains intact.

"Originally press people felt, 'This is it, there is going to be a crackdown' and so on," said

political scientist Sadeq Zibakalam, "but it seems that there wasn't any sort of organized and widespread crackdown. Since then, it has become somewhat relaxed."

Although several newspapers have criticized the arrests of the *Tous* employees as a violation of the Iranian Constitution—a charge brushed aside by the hard-line judiciary—editors admit to feeling intimidated.

"Yes, I must be more cautious now, because I could be faced by the Revolutionary Court," said Ali Dehbashi, editor of *Bukhara*, a review of art and culture.

A veteran daily newspaper editor who requested anonymity said: "No one will come here to tell me to write this or not to write that. But if I write something, I know there will be a price to pay."

For Iranians, the immediate effect is a press that is more cautious and less critical. Yet some Khatami supporters feel that the crackdown is a sign of worse things to come, a signal that the hard-liners are working to depose the president.

"If we lose Khatami, then we have no alternative within the system," warned Bedzab Nabavi, a leader of the pro-Khatami *Mojahadeen* of the Islamic Revolution Organization, in the *Salam* newspaper.

Started eight months ago as *Jameh*, *Tous* became Iran's most popular paper, selling 400,000 copies a day. But within hours of Khamenei's criticism of newspapers' 15 September edition, *Tous* operations were suspended by the judiciary, along with those of two small weeklies. The ban became final 28 September when the Press Supervisory Board revoked *Tous*' license.

Tous got in trouble for an alleged insult that might not even seem insulting to outsiders. The newspaper reported about an interview given in France by former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who said the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had once sought political asylum in France.

Hard-liners deny there was ever a request and considered it an insult to suggest that Khomeini, the leader of the 1979 revolution who remains an icon

nine years after his death, once asked such a favor of a Western power.

The Revolutionary Court, which prosecutes serious crimes under Islamic law, ordered the arrest of Jalaeipour. *Tous* editor Mashaallah Shamsolwazin, and the other two staff members. They were charged with acting against national security. Other newspapers maintain the action was illegal because it bypassed the watchdog Press Supervisory Board and an existing Press Court, which was created to consider cases involving journalistic errors and misdeeds. However, the head of Iran's judiciary, Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, said the judiciary's Islamic punitive codes take precedence over the press law when issues of national security arise.

Tous—which considered itself to be, in Shamsolwazin's words, "answering the needs of a generation"—had been fearless in testing the boundaries of freedom under Khatami. In July, it reported that district mayors had been beaten by police during questioning connected with the trial of suspended Tehran Mayor Gholamhossein Karbaschi. In August, it revealed evidence that the judiciary had been taking bail money on deposit with the courts and investing it in interest-bearing bank accounts, with the profits going to judicial officials.

Yazdi, the judiciary head, said the Revolutionary Court intends to keep a close eye on the press, something that had been the purview of the more liberal Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. For Dehbashi, the art review editor, that is bad news. "This court knows nothing about literature and culture," he said. "It is not familiar with journalism."

Another journalist, who requested anonymity, said conservatives acted "because they are simply frightened by a society that seems to have turned against them." The position of the hard-liners is historically in danger, he said. "If they give in to the tendency toward liberalism or pluralism, they will be lost forever."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Lahoud promises to restore stability to Lebanon

By John Daniszewski

BEIRUT—With unanimous approval in parliament, Lebanon's popular army commander was elected president this week. But the most important vote had been already been cast—by Syrian President Hafez Assad.

Syria has exercised an unofficial, although universally recognized, suzerainty over Lebanon since 1990, and Assad gave General Emile Lahoud the nod last week from Damascus.

The only dissenting voice to Lahoud's ascension as the country's 11th president was from Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, who objected on principle to a military officer becoming head of state. Jumblatt was among 10 deputies who abstained themselves from the vote.

Nevertheless, Lebanese of all faiths appeared to welcome the dynamic, no-nonsense officer, credited with largely expunging sectarianism from Lebanon's military. Many expressed hope he will do the same for the government.

Lahoud will be sworn in 24 November to succeed President Elias Hrawi, another Syria loyalist who served for nine years. Over the past year, Hrawi became embroiled in highly visible squabbles with Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and members of the media. Hrawi's original six-year term had been lengthened to nine years by parliament in 1995, but the 72-year-old Hrawi had indicated he wished to go through with his retirement.

"We consider that Lebanon has entered a



Lahoud

new era," Hariri said after last Thursday's vote. Newspapers were filled with accolades to the president-elect, and his portraits were displayed around the capital. Money traders pushed up the value of the Lebanese pound when it became clear that Lahoud would be elected.

Lahoud, a 62-year-old Christian who began his military career in the Lebanese navy under British and US trainers, has long been a prominent figure in Lebanon. He made his mark on 13 October 1990, when Lebanese troops under his command joined a Syrian-led attack to oust his predecessor as army commander, General Michel

Aoun, from his stronghold in the Christian enclave. The action proved to be the decisive end to Lebanon's 15-year civil war. A Syrian-imposed peace took root the following year, and Lahoud was assigned to rebuild the army, which during the civil war had fragmented along religious lines.

As a result of his efforts, the 60,000-strong army was rebuilt and retrained—gradually becoming something unique in Lebanon's society, a melting pot. It is an institution that all three of Lebanon's main faiths—Christian, Sunni Muslim and Shiite Muslim—now look to with pride.

Among other things, he abolished brigades organized on religious lines and kept army officers far from politics. With the army's growing professionalism and confidence, militias have disappeared—with the exception of Hezbollah forces fighting the Israeli occupation in South Lebanon—and an estimated 35,000 Syrian troops still in the country have reduced their visibility and retired to rural bases.

By tradition in Lebanon, the presidency is held by a Maronite Christian, the premiership by a Sunni Muslim and the parliament speaker's chair by a Shiite. That practice survived Lebanon's bloody civil war, but the president was reduced to being more a figurehead than a real leader.

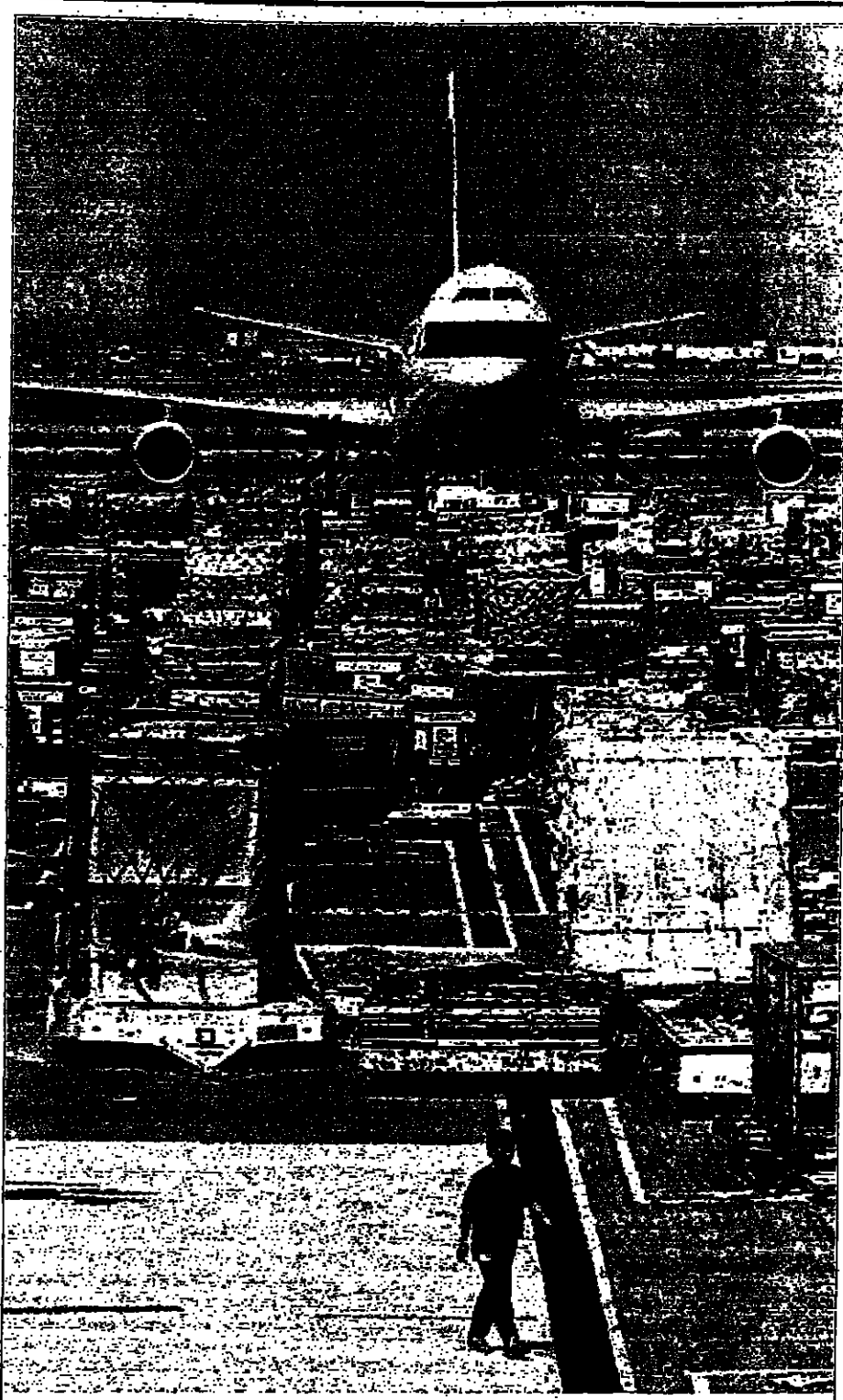
One question now is whether Lahoud, by dint of his personal popularity and the loyalty of the army, will bring greater authority back to the presidential office.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Lurie's NewsCartoon



(News Item: Japan's Government will probably inject a huge amount of \$400 billion into its faltering Bank.)



A worker walks past cargo to be handled at Hong Kong airport, 20 October, on the US\$1 billion SuperTerminal 1 facility. The territory's main air cargo handler, Hong Kong Air Cargo Terminals Ltd (HACTL), slapped restrictions on freight on Tuesday, due to a power failure at the terminal. The company had been forced to halt most cargo for 10 days, after Hong Kong's new airport opened in chaos on 6 July.

Army asked to run Pakistan's power distribution companies

By Mark Nicholson and Farhan Bokhari

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan's government is asking the army to take control of the country's loss-making state power utility in an attempt to rescue an International Monetary Fund loan vital for staving off a foreign debt crisis.

Officials said Nawaz Sharif, prime minister, had asked General Pervez Musharraf, the army chief of staff, to take over temporary management of the distribution companies of the Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda) and was awaiting a response. The military's chief role would be to enforce payment of arrears, root out corruption and improve efficiency.

"Each distribution company will have a brigadier, with his brigade, which will be responsible for the payment of bills," said a government official. He said the move would be purely "transitional," lasting no more than six months.

The proposal is designed to convince the IMF and the World Bank of Pakistan's seriousness in addressing structural problems in the heavily indebted Wapda, which supplies electricity to 90 per cent of Pakistan. The move has been prompted by the IMF's decision last week to defer a mission to Islamabad aimed at tying up cornerstone financing for a US\$ 5 billion debt rescue package. The fund was expected to demand a series of reforms, including that the government extend the sales tax, restructure utilities, unify exchange rates and cut spending. Pakistan is already in arrears of up to US\$1 billion on foreign debt and other payments. It faces outright default without a fund-backed programme and subsequent debt rescheduling. Reserves are just over \$600m, but Pakistan has made no debt repayments since mid-August.

Senior Pakistani officials admitted the IMF talks had broken down following Mr Sharif's announcement last week of a 30 per cent cut in electricity tariffs. The cut surprised Pakistan's negotiators in Washington, who were said to be on the verge of finalising agreement with the IMF. It also dismayed officials at the Fund and World Bank, who had been arguing for tariff increases to restore financial health to Wapda.

The utility is expected to show gross losses this fiscal year of Rs32 billion (US\$ 695 million). Pakistani officials say the tariff cut will lead to additional losses of Rs8 billion this fiscal year, a gap the government would propose covering through direct subsidies. Officials said Mr Sharif had announced the cuts because he feared an increase in power bills risked prompting popular unrest. They added that the decision would not be reversed.

"What we need to do at the sectoral level is get the power sector back in shape," said one official. "If we can do that, I hope the rest of the [IMF-sponsored] reform programme will stand. But there has been some loss of credibility."

Financial Times

Sundication

Kosovo still tense after partial pullout

By R Jeffrey Smith and Paul Watson

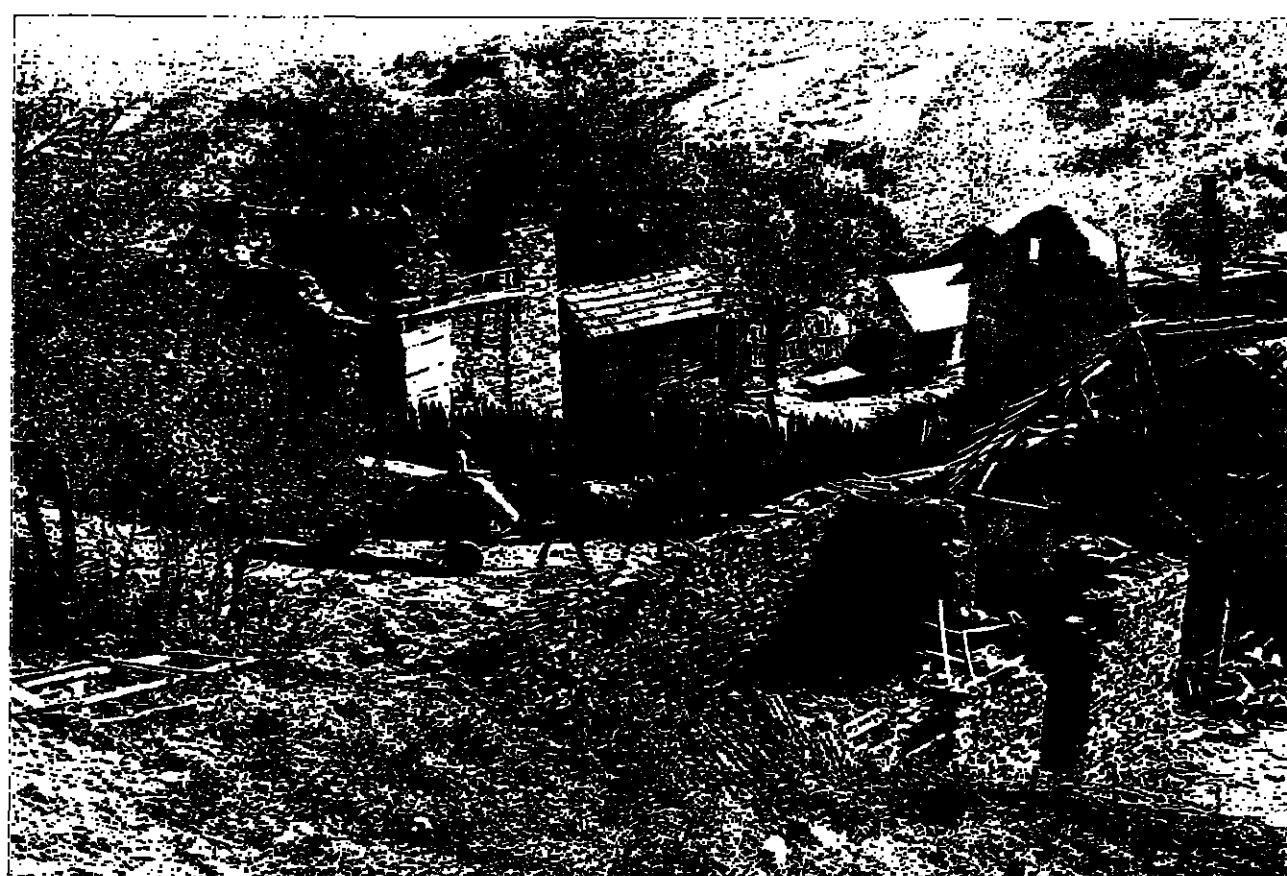
DECANI, Yugoslavia—The vehicles roaring down the road in the vicinity of this burned and bombed-out town Sunday afternoon were white, red, silver or blue, and manufactured in at least four countries, but most of them had one characteristic in common: They were obviously filled with federal police, recognizable from their uniforms or their sidearms and special radio gear.

Additional police drove by in two armored trucks, and—shortly after dark on a nearby highway—in an armored personnel carrier outfitted with anti-aircraft guns. Still more were deployed in nearby private homes decorated with Serbian flags and quartered at an idle industrial plant in the city of Djakovica and a stone quarry near the town of Voljaka.

A handful wearing dark ties, white plastic belts and large silver badges were also deployed at each of the dozen or so checkpoints encountered during a three-hour drive on main roads through central and western Kosovo.

Yugoslav officials have said the police presence in the embattled province of Kosovo represents a substantial reduction since the summer and early fall, at the peak of a government offensive against ethnic Albanian guerrillas fighting for Kosovo's independence from Serbia, Yugoslavia's most important republic.

But the residual force is so large and varied that at least one or two policemen were encountered every 10 minutes or so during the drive Sunday. That circumstance will likely complicate the task of Western governments as they try to assess whether the Yugoslav government is keeping its agreement to withdraw police and army troops involved in



An ethnic Albanian boy drives his horse-drawn cart through the remains of his devastated home village near Jezercë, about 60 kms south of the capital of Pristina, 19 October. The boy, who had travelled from a temporary camp in the forest, is among 50,000 refugees who are living in the mountains of central Kosovo.

putting down the rebellion. NATO has threatened to launch airstrikes against Serbian military targets if the forces are not withdrawn.

"This is not a country where the police ride around in vehicles clearly marked with the words, 'To Protect and Serve,'" said one Western diplomat, describing the difficult task awaiting foreign observers who will monitor compliance with the agreement reached between Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic and American

envoy Richard Holbrooke. "I have no idea how they are going to count who is here and who is not," he said.

Moreover, no matter what the precise number of police who have been withdrawn, the presence of any government forces in the region is intimidating to the majority ethnic Albanian community. "We've had enough of the police," said Valbona, a 14-year-old ethnic Albanian girl waiting at a bus stop south of Decani. "I hope that NATO will interfere in 10 days, or I will not stay here anymore."

An ethnic Albanian resident of the city of Pec, north of here, said that while a loosely observed cease-fire has eased daytime tensions somewhat, many policemen drink heavily at restaurants during the night and fire their guns in the air to intimidate residents. He and his friends dare not travel on roads where even a few police are present, because "if you get stopped, anything can happen," said the man, who asked not to be identified. US officials said that the Yugoslav government has far to go before it satisfies the troop withdrawal requirement.

According to National Security Council spokesman David Leavy, five of the seven Yugoslav battalions that the West wants withdrawn are still in place. As a result, US Army General Wesley Clark, NATO's supreme commander, is to return to Belgrade this week to raise the issue anew with Milosevic, who has consistently maintained that no further troop withdrawals are needed. Milosevic was so furious about Clark's initial visit to Belgrade last Thursday, that on Friday he sent his plane to bring Chris Hill, the chief US envoy for Balkan matters, from Macedonia to Belgrade so he could vent his anger in person.

But Hill did not budge, and Leavy said that Clark will tell Milosevic that "unless we see a full withdrawal of all relevant forces, we will have to consider the use of military force." That choice will be complicated by the arrival in Kosovo Monday of some foreign observers—the first team in an eventual group of up to 2,000—meant to monitor Yugoslav actions here.

Over the next few weeks, hundreds of foreign observers are due here in the war-ravaged Serbian province of Kosovo to start the hazardous job of making it safe for thousands of refugees to return. But before they can do that, they have to find safe places to live themselves.

A team of about 20 technical experts plans to travel across most of the province Monday to search for housing, office space and other basics for an expected 2,000 monitors. That would be hard enough in the best of times, because Kosovo is one of the poorest places in Europe, but continuing battles between Serbian security forces and ethnic Albanian guerrillas add a dangerous complication. "There will be a great deal of concern regarding security, and we will obviously try to be as aware as possible of the situation in any particular area at any time," John Sandrock, the American chief of the technical team, said after arriving in Kosovo on Sunday.

"But we will not confront," he added. "At least, I believe there will be no situation under which we will try to penetrate or go into an area that is insecure."

Each day, however, brings reports of new attacks. Saturday night, three Serbian police officers died in a guerrilla grenade attack about 30 miles west of Pristina, the provincial capital. They were killed on a road that cuts through guerrilla territory, in one of several areas

where Serbian police say rebels are attacking as security forces withdraw.

To get a complete look at Serbian forces in the province, the foreign observers will have to travel that route and many others that are just as dangerous. The observers are part of a deal reached last week between NATO and Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to sharply reduce the number of Serbian security forces in Kosovo and enable up to 300,000 refugees to return home.

NATO has given Milosevic until 27 October to either face air attacks or bring the number of police and army units down to the level they were at before the war escalated in March.

But the ethnic Albanian guerrillas, known as the Kosovo Liberation Army, didn't sign the deal, don't have a cease-fire agreement with the Yugoslav government and insist they will go on fighting for an independent Kosovo.

That means the unarmed monitors, including human rights workers, lawyers and experts on democracy, may find themselves crossing shifting front lines where enemies are still targeting each other.

Many police clearly have orders to stay put. Two were seen driving a tractor pulling a wagon load of freshly cut wood for winter heating; others were seen dropping off a supply of water to police quartered in a private home along the highway between Pec and the province's capital, Pristina.

"We don't feel secure," said an ethnic Albanian farmer, as he shook the reins of a horse pulling a wooden cart that held his wife and several children and nodded in the direction of a passing white Land Rover, which briefly blared a siren.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

North Ireland political leaders win Nobel Peace Prize

By Marjorie Miller

LONDON—The leaders of Northern Ireland's main Roman Catholic and Protestant political parties, John Hume and David Trimble, won the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday for the hard work and risks they have undertaken to end 30 years of sectarian violence in the British-ruled province.

In honoring a peacemaker from each of the embattled communities, the Norwegian Nobel Committee clearly intended to bolster this year's Good Friday peace agreement against its ardent opponents and doubters.

Conspicuously absent from the Nobel prize-winning team, however, was Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Féin, the Irish Republican Army's political wing, without whom there would be no possibility of peace—but whose inclusion would have been contentious.

The citation also did not mention other key players, such as former US Senator George J. Mitchell, who mediated months of negotiations between parties who weren't speaking to each other.

The five-member Nobel prize committee noted the "positive contributions" others had made to the Northern Ireland peace process but said it considered Hume and Trimble to be the main architects of the agreement that recognizes British rule in Northern Ireland while establishing closer ties between the province and the Irish Republic.

"The committee has reached the conclusion that the two laureates are the two most worthy candidates," said Francis Sejersted, head of the prize committee.

Hume, 61, the Catholic leader of the Social Democratic and Labor Party, has been at the forefront of Northern Ireland politics since the 1960s human rights movement. His advocacy of non-violence fell on deaf ears for many years before the deal between Protestant and Catholic nationalists was struck.

"John Hume has throughout been the clearest and most consistent of Northern Ireland's political leaders in his work for a peaceful solution," the Norwegian Nobel Committee stated.

Trimble, 54, once considered a Protestant hard-liner, has led the Ulster Unionist Party into the power-sharing agreement with unexpected determination, facing down dissidents from his own side to try to end a conflict that has taken more than 3,500 lives.

"As the leader of the traditionally predominant party in Northern Ireland, David Trimble showed great political courage when, at a critical state in the process, he advocated solutions which led to the peace agreement," the Nobel citation said.

Hume and Trimble came to symbolize the possibility of cross-community cooperation during the run-up to a referendum on the peace agreement in May. They appeared on stage together

dressed in their shirt sleeves and arms locked with the Irish rock singer Bono, who hailed their "leap of faith out of the past and into the future."

At an impromptu morning news conference in his hometown of Londonderry after learning of the award, Hume acknowledged the politicians and governments who crafted the peace agreement and the people of Northern Ireland who overwhelmingly endorsed it in the May referendum.

"I am deeply honored to have received this award today, but I see it not as an award for myself but as a very powerful international approval of the peace process in Northern Ireland," Hume said. "I think that today's announcement from the Nobel committee strengthens our peace process enormously because it tells all the people what the world wants to see on our streets."

Trimble, who was in Denver promoting investment in Northern Ireland, welcomed his award but expressed caution about the evolving peace process.

"We know that while we have got the makings of a peace, it is not wholly secure yet. I hope it does not turn out to be premature," he told the BBC.

In Washington, President Clinton praised Hume as a leader "committed to achieving peace through negotiation, not confrontation and violence," and called Trimble a man "who took up the challenge of peace with rare courage." Perhaps more than any other foreign

policy issue, Clinton became personally involved in an early stage of the Northern Ireland peace process. He became the first US president to reach out to the province's Protestant leaders, a move potentially unpopular with America's large and influential Irish Catholic community. And he risked undermining relations with Britain by ordering a controversial visa for Adams to visit the United States, then receiving Adams at the White House.

Many people had thought that if a Northern Ireland prize were shared, it would be a three-way split including Adams, who has come to reject the use of violence for bringing about the Catholic nationalists' goal of a united Ireland. Unlike Hume, Adams represents the Catholic men and women with the guns.

Speaking from New York, Adams congratulated both Hume and Trimble and said he was "delighted that the peace prize has come to Ireland." He said he hopes it will have the effect of accelerating implementation of the accord.

The agreement forged by the peacemakers says that Northern Ireland will remain part of Britain unless a majority of the people decide otherwise. Northern Ireland's Protestant majority is pro-British.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



John Hume



David Trimble

Worst of two worlds in remote Mexican village

By Ken Ellingwood

SANTA CATARINA, Mexico—In a dusty cemetery above the desert plain, seven fresh stone mounds symbolize the notoriety that so abruptly has been visited on this remote village of indigenous Baja Californians, the LA Times-Washington Post News Service reported.

The simple graves—including those of five children ages 4 to 13—are but one link between tiny Santa Catarina and the recent execution-style slaughter of 18 people an hour and a half away near the port city of Ensenada.

The massacre, some of whose victims grew up in this settlement of 250 or so Pai Pai Indians, has cast a spotlight on the community amid suspicions that Baja California's bustling drug trade is sweeping up the handful of indigenous tribes who inhabit a landscape as picturesque

as it is well-located for sneaking narcotics 70 miles north to the US border.

For the little-known Pai Pai—who lack running water and electricity but whose language and ways are grudgingly surrendering to modernity—the 17 September massacre has drawn bewildering visits from reporters and prompted nettlesome questions about drugs in a boulder-strewn expanse of melon patches and cattle ranches in the isolated interior of northern Baja.

Though Mexican authorities have been tight-lipped about their investigation into the killings, they said the motive might have been "problems" between some of the small drug-running gangs that have carved out clandestine airports and marijuana plantations far from the gaze of anti-narcotics squads.

One of those drug gangs was allegedly headed by Fermin Castro, a native Pai

Pai who ran the Santa Catarina school before moving on to become a prominent rodeo promoter around Ensenada. Castro, 38, believed to be the primary target of the assault, remains in a coma in an Ensenada hospital.

The Pai Pai's leader says outsiders have persuaded or pressured impoverished locals into selling land or letting them grow marijuana.

"People come here to convince the Indians to start growing other crops, you understand?" said traditional chief Juan Albarez Higuera, 76. "They start paying for this and giving money for that. And a lot of people who are needy go with them to work—doing whatever narcotics do. 'It's not good for us,' he said.

Other residents point to their humble living conditions as proof there are no lucrative drug ties.

"If there were drugs like they say on

the news, the people would be living better here," said Pascacia Ochure, 40, who sells sacks of corn and beans. She fingered a pile of bean plants drying outside her house on the village's edge. "If I were doing that, I wouldn't be struggling like this."

Mexican authorities said after the mass killing that Castro headed a group of small-time operators, or "bajadores," that paid a top lieutenant in the Tijuana-based Arellano Felix cartel for the right to smuggle drugs north to the United States. General Jose Luis Chavez Garcia, the top federal prosecutor in Baja, said the bands use remote landing strips and back roads to shuttle shipments from the Gulf of California to the Pacific Ocean.

Even residents who dispute reports of drug smuggling concede they know little of Castro's activities since he left town several years ago. Castro, who remains well regarded in a burg where nearly everyone is related in some way, visited rarely, residents said.

Pai Pai leader Albarez said evidence of a drug trade in the region, generally referred to as the Valle de Trinidad, began appearing a few years ago. The sound of small aircraft punctuates the desert stillness, and Albarez said military patrols are ever-present.

Some say poverty-plagued villagers are easy marks for outsiders dedicated to the narcotics trade. They also voice suspicions about signs of affluence they have seen around town.

"Those people are poor. Now lately they bring in nice cars, money's coming in, they dress well and all those things," said Pedro Espindola, who runs a little store at the highway turnoff to Santa Catarina and heads a public-safety committee in a nearby non-Indian community.

Indeed, Santa Catarina seems a jumble of contrasts. Squat shacks amid the boulders lack indoor plumbing, but several boast satellite dishes and televisions, powered by car batteries. Older Pai Pai women recall in rudimentary Spanish an era when poverty forced them to craft skirts from grass; some members of today's younger generation sport smartly styled dye jobs.

Santa Catarina was an ancient stopover for nomadic Pai Pai, who until this century shuttled from the mountains of the Baja interior to the coast and back as the seasons—and food prospects—changed, said anthropologist Mike Wilken, who directs the Ensenada-based Native Cultures Institute and has traveled among indigenous groups in Baja for nearly 20 years. The Pai Pai are one



Thelma Canedo cradles Pai Pai tribe's newest member, daughter Yunsay

of only four indigenous tribes in Baja California to survive the Spanish conquest, disease and diaspora. Jesuit missionaries who traversed the region in the 16th century estimated that Baja was home to some 50,000 indigenous people. The remaining ethnic groups—the Kiliwi, Kumiai and Cucapa—add up to no more than 800, some experts say. A fifth group calling itself Cochimi is part of the Kumiai, Wilken said. All live in the northern region of Baja.

Today, Pai Pai parents speak their traditional language at home but Spanish is the "lingua franca" in the classroom. Threads of Pai Pai religion, driven underground by Catholic missionaries, have blended into Christian beliefs.

Social and medical problems from alcoholism to tuberculosis are stubborn, and Pai Pai leaders and residents bemoan a lack of work and basic services. The town's signature products are clay pots and baskets crafted by village women and shipped to market in Ensenada or sold to tourists who brave the six-mile drive up a bumpy dirt road.

Young men leave town as soon as they are old enough to work, taking jobs as ranch hands elsewhere in the region or moving to Ensenada. The phenomenon creates the odd sense that Santa Catarina is missing a generation, that it is peopled only by children and the elderly.

"There's no work. There's no nothing. It's very isolated," said 66-year-old

Teresa Castro, who on a recent afternoon hand-shaped clay pots in a thatched shed next to her house. A great-aunt of Fermin Castro, she said making pots is the only vocation she has ever known. Until recently, those pots were probably the only thing outsiders knew of Santa Catarina.

Santa Catarina found itself in the glare of publicity after unknown gunmen assaulted Fermin Castro's ranch compound in the Ensenada suburb of El Sausal. Members of three families, two of them Pai Pai, who lived in the compound were yanked from their beds, ordered to lie face down on a concrete patio and sprayed with gunfire. Among the dead were Castro's sister, Sandra, her husband, Francisco Flores Altamirano, and their five children. The bodies were transported to the Indigenous Catholic Church—one of two churches in Santa Catarina—and later buried in the village cemetery.

Santa Catarina's residents have reacted to the mass killing with a stoic, but stunned, sadness. Squeezed over the centuries by conquest, revolution and nature's caprice, denizens of rural Baja find themselves in a vise of a new sort.

"There are very few viable economic alternatives available. They get to this point where they're offered a lot of money to participate in these illegal activities," Wilken said. "So they're damned if they do and damned if they don't."



Feliciano Canedo Mendoza, 57, has spent his life ranching in the isolated Baja region that has become a crossroads for drug traffickers.

The day I accused Ariel Sharon

By Nasser Ali Khasawneh

THERE WAS something surreal about Ariel Sharon's statements that he would not shake Arafat's hand if he were appointed foreign minister. The sense of the extraordinary was accentuated by the subsequent announcement that Sharon was actually appointed foreign minister of Israel, the country that prides itself on being "an oasis of democracy."

In the midst of all this insanity, I remembered the day I saw Sharon in person over seven years ago.

I only took part in a peaceful demonstration twice in my life, both in England. The first protest was against Ariel Sharon. An Arab friend called me the night before to ask me to take part in a demonstration to be held in front of the Oxford Union Society. Sharon had been invited to address the Society by an extremist group of Jewish students.

Early the next morning, I walked with great unease to the Society's building. I was soon to see at first hand the man who—in the eyes of Arabs, independent commentators across the world and the majority of Israelis—is a war criminal: the man whose arrogant face I first saw as a child in the news coverage of the litany of massacres left in the wake of Israel's invasion of Lebanon. For if there ever was one defining moment in my political consciousness, it is without a doubt the summer of 1982. I remember with absolute clarity my utter disbelief, that of an 11-year-old, at the blatant atrocities committed by the Israeli army and the cowardice of most Arabs who just watched or, at best, gave useless fiery speeches to clear their discredited consciences.

As I approached the site of the demonstration, I was sure of the kind of crowd that awaited me. I expected a mix of a few Arabs and Muslims. I

was just hoping that the size of the crowd would not be derogatory. Arab students abroad tend to have an obsessive fear of any form of political action, even if it is directed at one of their Governments' enemies. When I arrived, I was totally surprised to find that the number of Jewish and Israeli demonstrators outnumbered that of the Arabs. I was then further struck by the gregarious nature in which the Israelis and Arabs were mingling, at a time well before Oslo and the Jordanian/Israeli peace treaty. We were all united for a moment—united in our disgust and opposition to the actions of this war criminal, whose presence in our university we regarded as a sacrilege.

On that cold morning, fear of terror brought us together. In order to illustrate poignantly the extent of the protesters' unity, one of those present suggested that the Palestinian and Israeli flags be held up jointly, side by side, in defiance of our unwelcome visitor. To make the point even more strongly, it was decided that an Arab student should carry the Israeli flag and an Israeli the Palestinian. I remember the hesitation of an Arab protester as he was asked to carry the Israeli flag. He looked to ensure that a Jewish student was sticking to his side of the bargain. The Arab protester saw for the first time in his life an Israeli carrying a Palestinian flag; he subdued his hesitation and proceeded, albeit reluctantly, to hold the Israeli flag.

The car carrying the war criminal and his hosts stopped at the bottom of the road leading to the Oxford Union Society. Sharon, an extremist companion wearing a smug look for the morning, walked up the road. I don't recall having been instructed on the form of protest we should direct at Sharon. But the minute he was in our sight, a deaf silence swept our group. Then,



Sharon

in unison, each of us lifted his right arm and pointed the index finger at Ariel Sharon. We just stood there, proud of our common stand against terror and one of its greatest mongers this century. We pointed the finger of accusation at a visibly dumb-struck Ariel Sharon. He might have expected a few Arab hecklers, but nothing had prepared him for the sight of a Jew carrying a Palestinian flag and pointing the finger of accusation in his face. Our hands stretched out, unwavering, until Sharon entered the safety of the Society's building.

On that cold morning, we accused Ariel Sharon. We accused him of the murder of 17,825 innocent persons, and the infliction of grievous injuries on another 30,000 innocent persons, during the invasion of Lebanon (according to

sources quoted by the Library of Congress). We accused him of inciting, aiding and abetting the massacre of "well over a thousand people" in Sabra and Chatila (according to the most conservative estimates quoted by Robert Fisk in *Pliny the Nation: Lebanon at War*, Oxford University Press, 1990).

Months after that protest, I attended a lecture on war crimes given by one of my law professors. The British professor ended her talk by listing a few persons whom she regarded as undisputed war criminals: she told us that any law-abiding citizen of the world has the right to arrest these persons on sight. The first name on that ignominious list was that of Israel's new foreign minister.

I wonder which part of Sharon's illustrious record of achievements Benjamin Netanyahu was referring to when he announced his appointment. Mr. Netanyahu said, and I quote, "Sharon is the most fitting person in the state of Israel for the position of foreign minister. He brings with him rich experience, creativity, proven working ability."

Are Sharon's actions in Lebanon indicative of "rich experience", or perhaps they attest to "proven working ability"? As for "creativity", I believe Netanyahu must have been referring to some of Sharon's more recent statements on how to deal with current crisis with the Palestinians and neighboring Arab countries. For example, let us take the following strikingly creative suggestion by Sharon on how to best handle the Lebanese problem: "Bridges should be destroyed and cars should stand still and maybe then Lebanon will understand."

Sharon's appointment, and Netanyahu's laudatory remarks announcing it, are an insult to all Arabs and Israelis alike, including those who stood with

us pointing the finger of accusation that morning in England. But as always, the Arab reaction, or non-reaction to be more accurate, has been astonishing.

The man who has massacred nearly 20,000 Arabs, according to the estimates of Arab and non-Arab sources, has the audacity to prescribe conditions to his participation in the peace process. And what is worse, he found no Arab official to respond to him in kind. The foreign minister of an Arab country, when asked to comment on the appointment of Sharon, responded listlessly that this was a mere internal Israeli affair.

This is no internal Israeli affair. This is an affair about the illicit invasion of a country and the massacres committed by the leader of that invasion. This is an affair about innocent lives that lay crushed by tanks on Arab soil 16 years ago. Even the Kahan Commission, formed by the Israeli government to investigate the Sabra and Chatila massacres, reached the conclusion that Sharon bore "personal responsibility" for the atrocities, and further requested that Begin, then Prime Minister of Israel and Sharon's blood brother of sorts, fire Sharon from his Government post.

I call on Arab officials to defy Sharon like we did as a bunch of students seven years ago. I call on them to honor the memory of all those innocent lives this man destroyed. I call on them to accuse Sharon of crimes against humanity, of which his own people and legal system have already convicted him.

The writer, who is Chief Editor of the Geneva-based *Ad Hoc bi-monthly*, is also currently working as a Corporate Legal Council for a multinational company in Switzerland. He contributed this article to *The Star*.

Pope warns about modern life

By Hanna Rosin and Sarah Delaney

MARKING THE twentieth anniversary of his election, Pope John Paul II painted a picture of a modern world in which people wander without a sense of purpose in life, and he heralded the Catholic church's role in guarding against such despair.

The Polish born pontiff's message is contained in an encyclical—the most authoritative level of papal document, and it is one that many theologians are calling the aging pope's last will and testament. As John Paul enters his waning years, his lasting influence will be felt at least in part through the hundreds of teaching documents he leaves behind.

The latest document does not go into specific church teachings, but instead sums up a theme repeated throughout his long papacy: that there are unshakable truths and that scientific and other theories that question the role of faith should be rejected. It also stresses that religion and scientific reason are not incompatible.

Everything is reduced to opinion, and there is a sense of being adrift," he writes. "People rest content with partial and provisional truths, no longer seeking to ask radical questions about the meaning and ultimate foundation of human, personal and social existence."

Other recent papal documents have reinforced the church's position on specific issues from abortion to the ordination of women as priests. But the latest statement is more sweeping, laying the foundations of the church's unique importance as a bulwark against modern man's "temptation to despair."

True to his style, the voice of his latest declaration is less that of a teacher than a prophet. The paper is addressed to the bishops as if it were an in-house memo, but its real audience seems to be the great modern philosophers of the world at large.

His message is also one to world leaders, John Paul has long been suspicious of the twentieth century political figures who John Paul says pass off rigid dogma as truth, and lead millions down a destructive path.

For two decades, the pope has played the role of global peacemaker and diplomat, visiting 116 countries and challenging both Third World dictators for suppressing liberties and Western leaders for ignoring the indignities of democratic capitalism. Everywhere he travels, he pounds home a simple message: respect mankind's right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. "His passion is for preserving freedom," said

Father J Augustine DeNoia, head of the doctrine section of the US Catholic Conference.

By personifying an otherwise airy philosophical tract, the pope allows himself to address problems as intimate and real as human despair and hopelessness. Modern man is at risk of lapsing into a "deadening routine," he writes. "Many people stumble through life at the very edge of the abyss without knowing where they are going."

The 154-page document seeks to address fundamental existential questions that men and women pose to themselves: "Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after life?" The answer can be found in the eternal truths of the Catholic faith. Mostly because his reign has lasted so long, this pope has been able to issue an unusually large number of encyclicals, covering a wide range of subjects.

His voice in them recalls the young university professor in his native Poland famous for engaging his students in spirited philosophical debates.

"He's a philosopher at heart," said DeNoia. "He holds a deep conviction that you can reach the truth through philosophical inquiry."

John Paul, 78, is the longest serving pope in recent history, and many theologians consider his reign the most dynamic and momentous of the century. From his innovations in theology to his mastery of television, he is considered the first truly modern pope.

At a packed news conference at the Vatican, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who heads the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, told reporters that with this encyclical, the pope sought to address the "question of the truth" which he said is "the fundamental question that crosses all the ages and seasons of life and of the history of humanity."

Luigi Accattoli, Vaticanologist for the Milan daily *Corriere della Sera*, said the document was "addressed to bishops and theologians, and not to the people. It's too long, and the theme is too difficult to be read and understood by most Catholics." The message for Catholics, he said, is "to rebel against the postmodern tendency not to have faith in the truth. People today tend to think that there is no universal truth, but that each person has his own. The pope is saying that's not right."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Flu shot season is here

Studies suggest that flu shots can cut days lost from work and school caused by flu and prevent serious complications, especially in those at high risk of flu infections.

By Sally Squires

WASHINGTON—When Nicole Johnson, the newly crowned Miss America, returns home to Virginia next week, one of her first appointments will be to get a flu shot.

Johnson is 24, decades younger than the Medicare recipients usually advised to get protected against influenza, the viral infection better known as "the flu." But because she has juvenile diabetes, Johnson is one of millions of Americans who are at high risk for flu complications and thus need to get a flu shot, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Influenza is a respiratory infection and should not be confused with gastric problems often also called "the flu." It produces fever, chills, sore throat, muscle aches and wracking cough, and it can be deadly, especially among the elderly and others who have compromised immune systems. Each year, about 20,000 Americans die from flu and its complications. The disease usually lasts longer than common respiratory infections, often a week or more. Pneumonia is one of the more severe complications of influenza.

Because of its serious repercussions, public health officials urge large segments of the population to be vaccinated against the flu each fall. The best time for getting flu shots is from October through November, according to the CDC, because the disease generally runs its course during the winter months.

The CDC recommends annual flu shots for:

■ Adults and children who have underlying health problems or chronic conditions, including kidney dysfunction, lung disorders, diabetes and cardiovascular illnesses, such as heart disease.

- People who are 65 years and older.
- Pregnant women who will be in the second or third trimester of pregnancy during the flu season.
- Residents of nursing homes and

influenza branch, and other public health officials are also quick to underscore that flu shots protect only against three strains of influenza. Each year, the shot contains different strains of virus, which have been chosen based on the flu epidemic in the Southern hemisphere. This year, flu shots guard against the H3N2 virus: the Sydney 597 strain (similar to the virus that caused outbreaks in Alaska during the summer and illness in the United States last winter); and a Beijing type of flu virus.

Flu shots can't protect, however, against the virus that causes the common cold. Nor can they prevent other frequent winter illnesses such as bacterial strep throat infections or ear infections.

Studies suggest, however, that flu shots can cut days lost from work and school caused by flu and prevent serious complications, especially in those at high risk of flu infections.

There may be even more benefits from preventing the flu. In a report published earlier this year in the Archives of Internal Medicine, a team of scientists from the University of Rochester and Seattle's Virginia Mason Hospital found that flu can be particularly devastating to the overall health of frail elderly people, robbing them of their ability to function well. The study examined 131 survivors of flu outbreaks in six nursing homes and compared them with a control group of 127 elderly patients who escaped the

flu. Twenty-five percent of those who got the flu experienced a decline in at least one major function in the four



other chronic-care facilities. ■ People who live with or work with those who are at high risk of influenza complications. But Nancy Cox, chief of the CDC's

Hands-on surgery cuts recuperation time for kidney cancer

By Hilary Waldman

HARTFORD, Connecticut—At the risk of sounding corny, Dr. Steven J. Shichman says he may have found a better way to treat kidney cancer right in the palm of his hand.

His left hand. Of all the expensive sophisticated surgical devices he's used, Shichman says his hand is the only instrument sensitive and agile enough to allow the removal of a cancerous kidney through a tiny abdominal incision.

His technique promises to ease pain and drastically reduce recovery time for patients with kidney cancer.

Until late March, patients diagnosed with kidney cancer faced two unsettling realities: the disease itself and the treatment—generally a foot-long slice through the abdominal muscle above the belly button through which doctors would remove the kidney. For patients whose cancer is caught early, removal is usually a cure, with no need for chemotherapy or radiation. Patients whose kidney cancer has spread to the lymph nodes or adjacent organs are not considered good candidates for surgery.

Recovery in the hospital would take about a week, during which the surgical wound could make breathing painful. It would be another two to three months before the patient felt good enough to return to work and other activities.

Laparoscopy—an increasingly common technique in which surgery is performed through inches-long slits using a miniature camera and pencil-thin instruments—has not been an option for the removal of cancerous kidneys.

Shichman, a surgeon who specializes in the urinary tract, thought there had to be a better way. He got the idea for the hand-assisted technique last January when some of his partners in a large Hartford surgical practice headed to Atlanta for a training course in removing spleens and colons using laparoscopy and their hands.

Shichman tagged along. "I introduced myself as a urologist from Hartford, and they apologized; they said the course on incontinence is next week," Shichman said, clearly pleased that he'd hit the timing just right on this well-rehearsed punch line.

But Shichman's idea was no folly. While it was possible to remove noncancerous kidneys using traditional laparoscopy, cancer made this less-invasive method virtually impossible.

First, cancerous kidneys often are enlarged by tumors, making them too big to be slipped out through tiny incisions. And to ensure that the

cancer has not spread, the surgeon must remove all of the surrounding fat and tissue for analysis by a pathologist. No cancer cells can be left behind.

To do this, doctors commonly make a 12- to 18-inch incision in the patient's upper abdomen or chest, above the belly button and through the rib cage.

Surgeons then use both hands to grasp the kidney, isolate the surrounding blood vessels, fat and connective tissue and cut out the offending organ. Shichman's alternative combines the best of both surgical methods: his hands and the delicate instruments that make less-invasive laparoscopic surgery possible.

Because the traditional laparoscopic incision is so small, any probing and cutting must be done with long, tube-like instruments.

To see the internal organs, doctors inflate the abdomen with carbon dioxide, then insert a miniature camera through a tiny hole near the belly button. Several additional half-inch slits are made elsewhere in the abdomen for insertion of the surgical instruments.

With their hands outside the body, doctors manipulate the instruments like robot arms. The internal action is projected on TV screens above the doctor's head. It is much like playing a high-stakes video game with two very long, skinny joysticks.

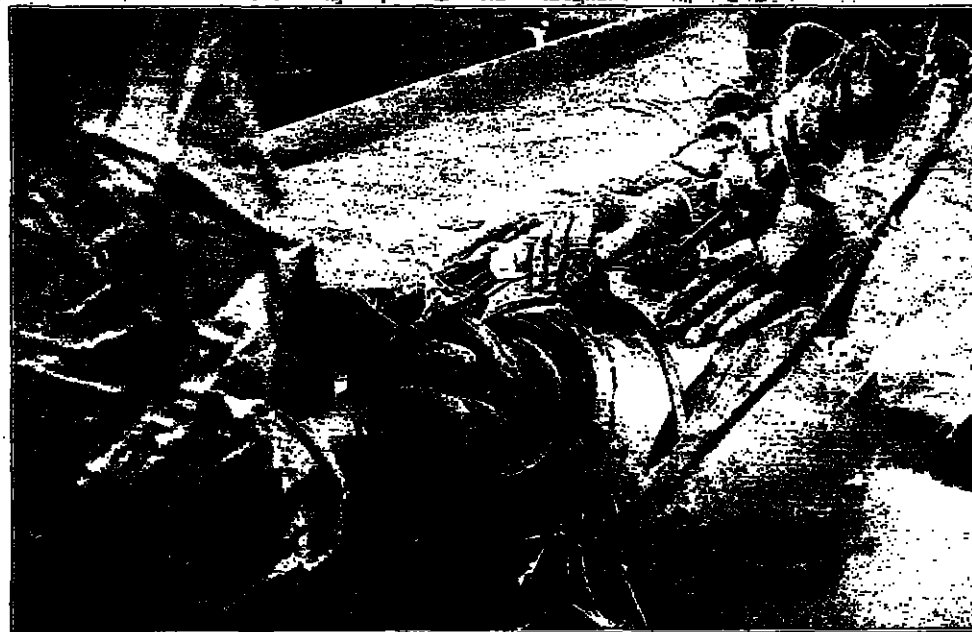
Shichman simply replaces one of the joysticks with his left hand, requiring an incision about 3 inches long—just long enough to accommodate his wrist. With his left hand, sheathed in a sterile plastic, Shichman holds the kidney, using his sensitive fingers to separate it from surrounding organs and feeling for the tumor, large blood vessels and other tissue that could be damaged by a wayward scalpel.

His right hand remains outside the abdomen, manipulating the joysticks that control the scissors, scalpels and retractors used to cut out the cancerous kidney.

Because the kidneys act like the body's waste-water treatment plant, huge quantities of blood are constantly washing through large vessels for cleaning in the avocado-size organs. At any one time, 20 percent of the body's blood volume is flowing through the kidneys. If one of these vessels is accidentally cut, the patient could bleed to death.

An important advantage of using his hand is that Shichman can feel for the blood vessels before he makes a cut. It also helps prevent injury to other nearby organs, including the intestines, spleen, liver and pancreas, he said.

"Without my hand I couldn't do this," Shichman said. "You



Urologist Dr. Steven J. Shichman pulls a cancerous kidney out through a small opening in the side of a man after using a camera and surgical instruments to guide the operation.

can pick up the whole kidney to make sure there's nothing behind it."

So far, Shichman has performed about two dozen hand-assisted laparoscopic kidney removals on patients at Hartford Hospital and at hospitals in Pennsylvania and New York City. In addition to Hartford, the procedure is being performed at a few other hospitals in the United States.

Shichman has been invited to teach his technique at laparoscopic-training centers across the country, including the place where he had to sneak into the course for colon and spleen surgeries.

"He's a very talented surgeon," said Dr. Bill Saye, CEO for the Advanced Laparoscopic Training Center in Marietta, Ga., just outside Atlanta. "I don't think anybody was doing malignant kidneys with a purely laparoscopic technique, with the hand-assisted technique, he was definitely among the first."

While the technique has yet to gain widespread use, Shichman's patients are pleased with the results. James J. Skelsky, 70, of Bristol, said he was told about the less-invasive surgical alternative by Dr. Bert M. Berlin, one of Shichman's partners and an old-school urologist who at first was skeptical.

But too often, Berlin had seen the painful recuperation from traditional kidney-cancer surgery. "Everything would go fine and two days later, the patient would cough, or couldn't cough and get a little pneumonia and then you've got a problem," Berlin said.

He was willing to test an alternative. He was pleasantly

surprised. "It just makes such a tremendous difference with people," Berlin said. Skelsky said he never felt any pain at the incision sites, after his hand-assisted kidney removal May 6. By the following day, he was walking around Hartford Hospital and within a week, he was back to his normal activities at home.

Shichman removed Donna Jetmar's cancerous left kidney Aug. 20. On Aug. 29, the 43-year-old North Haven mother of two went to a cousin's wedding. Jetmar said she knew the

hand-assisted technique was somewhat untested. But she put her faith in Shichman and the promises of a smaller incision, less pain and quicker recuperation.

"It was the recuperation period," that Jetmar said convinced her to try the new approach. "Removing a rib, cutting me nine or 10 inches around my side to achieve the same results, I'd prefer to go this route."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Start your day with breakfast says nutritionist

Lubna Khader
Star Staff Writer

"A HEALTHY mind is a healthy body." It's an old saying which constitutes a medical rule, but the concept of a healthy body depends on one single factor: Good nutrition is the key to a healthy life.

Having breakfast should be an essential part of your diet. The first meal of the day is a must, but unfortunately very few of us take the time to have breakfast. Many don't eat breakfast because of what they claim to be a lack of time in the morning. However, leaving home on an empty stomach could have serious negative effects on your body.

Child Nutritionist Dr. Ibrahim Gilani, explains that studies conducted in various developed countries in the field of nutrition have indicated the vital importance of breakfast. "Breakfast can prevent disorders such as malnutrition and Anemia," he adds.

One of the studies emphasized that children who regularly have breakfast are more active than students who don't. "School days are long,

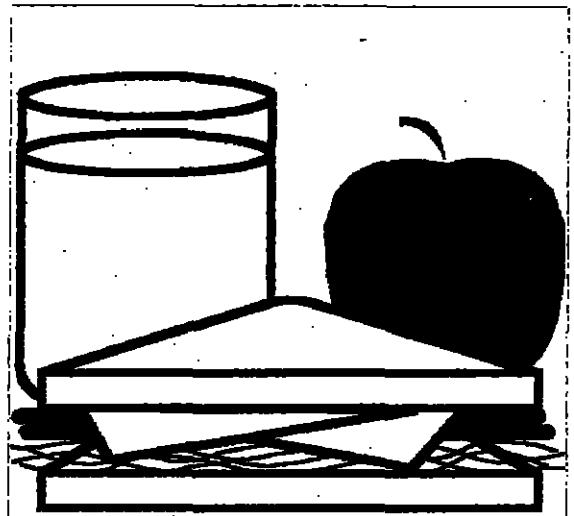
and if the stomach is empty the rate of sugar in the blood drops, which can eventually lead to fatigue, headaches and lack of concentration," Dr. Gilani explains.

Certain schools in advanced countries request that their students bring sandwiches or fruits with them, while others distribute light meals during breaks to ensure that students consume the right amount of food, which will lead to better productivity.

An ongoing United Nations project provides children in underprivileged countries with all the food they need in the early years of their lives. "Cheese, bread, milk and other healthy elements are distributed to children," says Dr. Gilani.

Although breakfast is an essential element for every day, lunch and dinner are also important, if you desire the perfect balanced diet.

Dr. Gilani believes that health is an educational process that should be the responsibility of parents and educational institutions. They are the ones who ultimately should be spreading awareness for balanced diets; the basis for a healthy life.



'Stress is good'

NO FENG SHUI, let's get stressed. Who wants a world where we are all stomach-churningly nice? Rohan Candappa doesn't. I'm sorry, but it's time someone finally spoke the truth.

It's time someone waded in on behalf of the ultimate underdog. It's time someone shook free of the shackles of contemporary convention and proclaimed loud and clear: "Stress is good."

For far too long stress has been demonized, vilified and made to feel thoroughly unwanted. But the truth is, it's just misunderstood. It's the victim of doggy PR, its only crime is to have fallen foul of a conspiracy of pamper, new age gooders.

My point is that without stress we would all be very, very nice and stomach-churningly contented. But who wants to live in a world like that?

Of course, the other reason we should all champion the cause of stress is that, in common with kippers, kedgeree and Kendal mint cake, it is a great British invention. It is ingrained deep into the very soul of the society.

Take, for instance, the British love of queuing. On the surface, to the untrained eye, this would appear a convention expressly designed to encourage an ordered, stress-free world. It is not. Implicit in the existence of every queue is the possibility, and all too often the actuality, of The Queue Jumper. And The Queue Jumper is one of the shock troops of stress creation.

Consider the world from this enlightened viewpoint and it becomes clear that a queue isn't a line of people waiting to get something, but a line of people waiting to be wound up.

And it is part of the perverse genius of the British that The Queue Jumper scenario is fanned by a general unwillingness to complain. After all, there is nothing more likely to exacerbate stress than the bottling up of resentment (another British speciality).

Or take the offside rule in football. What is the purpose of this marvelous rule if not to generate incredible levels of stress and angst in something that is, in reality, a game and should be fun? The rule, a bland set of words on the page, in practice manages to annoy players, officials, supporters and (broadcasters) Jimmy Hill. What a joy. And it's a purely British invention.

In fact, so perfect is the offside rule at generating stress, it is my firm belief that it should not be confined to the football field. It should be embraced in everyday life. For instance, whenever you are in danger of losing any argument, be it professional, politi-

cal or personal and your opponent is sprinting towards your metaphorical open net about to score the winning goal, you should be allowed to leap to your feet, shout "offside," stop the game and regain possession.

Would that not get the hackles rising? All of which brings me to the recently published Little Book of Stress. It is a truly visionary tome and probably the only self-help book you could happily leave lying around on your desk, or give to friends, without being thought a sad loser.

The admirable aim of this soon-to-be modern classic is to increase the levels of stress both in yourself, and in those around you. As such, it is an invaluable tool in the workplace, in the home and in your personal relationships.

Simple advice such as: "Put empty milk cartons back in the fridge," can safely be followed by the novice stress-creator beginning, but when you see the stress it generates it will give you the confidence you need to move on to the more advanced techniques.

For example, under the heading "Working Late The Double Whammy" comes the advice: "Always work late. Everyone else in the company will hate you for it, except your boss who will despise your gullibility." The book even has suggestions that will help add spice to the modern love life. Who could deny the validity of the page that suggests: "If you're enjoying a physical relationship with a new man, give it a few weeks and then tell him that you've missed your period. This information is best left on an answering machine."

The book is by no means a definitive guide. But it is a start. Its wisdom will enable you to generate stress wherever you go. You will cause offence, you will induce upset and you will create friction.

But, let's be honest, in a world without friction everything would soon slip away. So I urge you to resist the quasi-fascist restraints of the naysaying, feng shui, mucus-munching tendency that insists on peddling the rapidly crumbling orthodoxy that "stress is bad."

And when they fix you with their supportive gaze and ask in a voice like a slice of wet Wensleydale: "But don't you suffer from stress?" Instead, lean in towards their personal space, look meekly into their understanding eyes, then shout at the very top of your voice: "SUFFER FROM STRESS? NO, I RATHER ENJOY IT!"

The Little Book of Stress is published by Ebury Press at £1.99. Its author has a remarkably similar name to the writer of this article. Financial Times Syndication

Prevention is better than cure

By Ehsan Nimri
Special to The Star

The following are common ailments which are caused by the routine of daily life:

Stress: The key to controlling stress is to monitor and challenge your negative thinking. Re-evaluate your role in life. Stress grows from the result of a mismatch between your personality/goals and the realities of a particular situation. Seek yourself for 15 minutes in water at between 100-102°F. This is an effective time and temperature for stress relief.

Headaches: Looking at a flat tank can make you smile, sometimes a slight drooping of the eyes and some easy stretches during the day can help you feel more peaceful and relaxed.

Eyestrain: When you are working on a computer, stop every hour for about two minutes and give your

eyes a rest, when you are reading, stop every 3 minutes and focus on something far away for few seconds, and blink frequently. This cleanses your eyes. Warm eyebright tea is a gentle laxative for eyes.

Heartburn: Eat small portions of meals more frequently to avoid heart burn. Drink water with your meal; it will wash stomach acid from the surface of the esophagus. Place the head of your bed on a 6 inch block; this will reduce heartburn by minimizing the flow or reflux from your stomach into the esophagus. Consult your doctor if the heartburn is accompanied by vomiting, black stools, pain when swallowing, dizziness and chest pain.

Headaches: Plug your ears with your fingers for about 20 seconds can halt hiccups. Drinking requires a lot of swallowing, this is probably the best way to stop hiccups. Sticking your tongue out is another

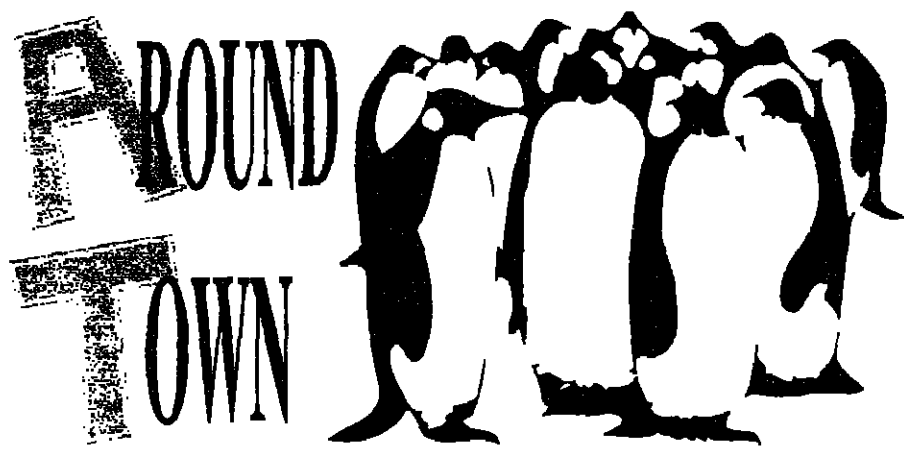
proven remedy, while sitting on a chair or on the floor and pulling your knees up to your chest also works; this works by compressing your chest. Drinking vinegar is another popular choice, which requires lot of swallowing and ultimately ends hiccups.

Constipation: Caused by a lack of fibre in the diet, insufficient liquid intake, stress, medications, lack of exercise, and bad bowel habits. The cure is simple and includes daily consumption of 20-35 gms of dietary fibre for adults (at least another 30 gms should be taken for those who suffer from constipation). A minimum of 6 glasses of liquids—preferably 8 glasses—should be a part of every adult's life. Eliminate from your diet all oils that have been removed from their source, such as liquid vegetables, olive or soya oil. However, oils eaten in their natural form (locked up in such things as

whole nuts or corn) are released slowly into the body, reducing oil slicks that block digestion and create constipation problems.

Insomnia: A lavender fragrance is very effective at inducing a deep sense of relief. Other aromas include special apple dishes, packed desserts and salty seafood. People who sleep on linen sheets fall asleep faster and wake up in a better mood than using cotton or other fabrics. Drinking a cup of warm milk at bedtime helps you sleep better; as does taking a warm bath an hour or two before bedtime.

Snoring: Excess weight and late night drinking are commonly associated with snoring. Sleeping pills should be avoided, as well as allergy medicines and antihistamines. Sleeping on your stomach decreases the volume and incidence of snoring.



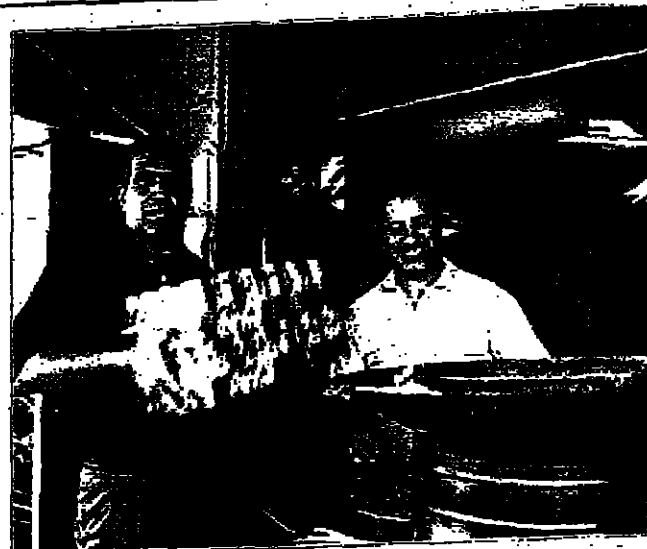
Sales up for Coca-Cola

THE COCA-COLA Company reported that the third-quarter unit case volume increased 3 percent, on top of 11 percent growth in the third quarter of 1997. As previously indicated, due to moderate growth in volume and continued currency declines, fully diluted earnings per share in the third quarter of 1998 were equal to the third quarter 1997 EPS, excluding gains on bottling transactions in both years.

"With a business system operating in nearly 200 countries, we are not immune to the economic difficulties that currently exist in many markets around the world," said M. Douglas Ivester, chairman, Board of Directors and chief executive officer. "However,

one thing is clear, our resolution and commitment to strengthening our system through this difficult time and making the right decisions for the long term is stronger today than it has ever been," Mr Ivester said.

"During this time of global uncertainty, our system will continuously demonstrate the mindset of the industry leader, with determination to stay focused on creating value for our customers, and our share owners. We have a great business proposition—people get thirsty every day and we provide a simple moment of refreshment, virtually everywhere and at a very affordable prices," he added.



OFF THE WALL

Where is the coffee?

By Rana Haddad
Special to The Star

LOOK AROUND you and then try not to misjudge me for having the same mentality as my grandma. I, as well as most of you, belong to that nation which had decided right from the beginning to separate itself by having values and morals which other nations don't insist on.

The other day I was sitting with a friend. She suddenly got up and decided to show me something. We jumped into her car and drove around for a while before stopping at a corner. We got out of the car when she pointed her finger to a familiar sight in suburban Amman these days: We both gazed at the Internet cafe.

But she soon realized that she made a mistake. The last thing I needed after spending seven hours working at the Internet section is to go to an Internet cafe. But she insisted that I should come in to have a look.

And what was there? Many people of different ages and various social backgrounds—male and female. At first this made me excited. The Internet isn't just for the wealthy, but it is also for those who care to keep up with the latest technology.

But my delight soon ended while I was walking between the computers. Children come here for the sake of games, others come to see pictures, especially those they are not allowed to look at on the cinema windows, whilst walking with their mothers or fathers. At the end of my round I realized that no matter where you go to, it's all the same. The Internet Cafe is not being used effectively.

I was so upset that my friend decided to make it up to me. She drove to another cafe, this time one that does not include an Internet service, but to have a real cup of coffee and some peace and quiet. Can you imagine what was awaiting for me? I won't tell you since until now I can't believe the things that my own eyes witnessed. It was a nightmare.

The most important thing is that I've decided not to join my friend again, as she tries to make me believe that money is the only thing the new yuppies of Jordan understand. Her evidence was that you can do anything, anytime and anywhere, just by getting your wallet out of your pocket. For sure, there were many wallets waiting to be filled.

Calligraphy on crafts unveils Jordan's treasure haven

By Koffi Attah
Special to The Star

VISITING THE gallery of the Jordan Crafts Development Center, 'Alaydi' one is struck by at least three things: the quality of the collection, the comprehensibility of the items on display and Jordan's rich cultural heritage. The current exhibition, opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Servath, and entitled 'Calligraphy on Crafts,' is evidence of the Kingdom's known and unknown treasures.

Rather than ask what Jordan has or has not, the exhibition is the best way for a tourist, Jordanian or Arab who is still unaware of Jordan's enormous cultural resources, to view the hidden treasures of the country.

Displayed en masse, the pieces allow the reassembling of Jordan's traditional and contemporary craft making.

Right in the reception hall, variety of crafts such as plates and vessels with Arabic/Islamic calligraphy mostly 'ayats' (verses) from the holy Koran are seen. Other items on display include hand blown glass and cups in ceramics. To the right, in the adjacent rooms are pieces of old long guns, multicolor Bedouin blankets, woven fabrics and other tent accessories. In another room is a unique display of Bedouin loom woven rugs. According to the Center's director, Mai Khoury, there are glass, ceramics, wood, copper, silver, and gold works on display from 15 different craftsmen and women from all over the Kingdom on display.

"Most of the pieces here are handcrafted by local villagers," she added. And this is what the exhibition is about. It shows the artistic credentials of Jordanian craftsmen and women. However, their talent and creativity go beyond what is on display.

To the right of the reception hall is a selection of traditional crafted copper, brass, and silver ornaments displayed in an antiquated wooden box. The collection is made up of silver knives, spoons, necklaces and miniature swords. There is a lot to be taken home as souvenir—elegant post cards with Arabic calligraphy, tablecloths, wall hangers, cushions and pillows in a wide range of motifs.



HRH Princess-Servath (center) opens exhibition

colors and styles that characterize the different parts of the country.

The six-room center is all filled with quality products in line with its aims. 'Alaydi' was established in 1979 by enthusiastic crafts supporters to preserve the country's traditional and cultural heritage, promote and develop national crafts for both local and international markets. "We are interested in high standards of production and quality crafts," says Ms. Laurie Hlass, one of the founding members of the center and a former Ambassador to Morocco.

The center is going all out to reinvigorate arts in Jordan. The exhibition not only reveals Jordan's craft prowess but also how calligraphy is interwoven with handicrafts. Colourful hand-blown traditional glass and other pieces decorated with illuminating Arabic calligraphy that brings out the holiness of the Koran is a good example. A rare display of the country's embroidery is seen every-

where in the exhibition. Traditional and contemporary customs, jackets, djalebs and other Arabic/Islamic robes are in aesthetic demonstration.

At the back room is a number of straw trays and baskets handcrafted by local folks. Other pieces are clay pottery, clay effigies, brass mortars and pestles. Each piece represents different epochs in the history of Jordan. In the inner room are traditional brass tea kettles, pots with decorative patterns, Jerusalem pottery and several traditional items.

A touch of elegance in gold and silver jewelry both—traditional and contemporary—carry the viewer through a world of perfection. Many Jordanian craftsmen and women may be handicapped for many reasons, yet within the walls of limitations, they are ever coming out with something impressive.

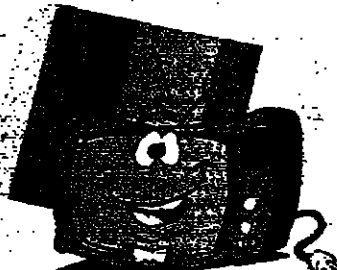
Much of what is found is artistic excellence. The visitor is unlikely to be

bored as he or she journeys through the artistic Kingdom of Jordan at the gallery. In fact, there is a lot to take seriously. Embroidery, weaving, jewelry pottery and many others.

Several pieces on display have places in the historic chapters of Jordan, the Arab world and the Middle East in general. For the tourist, hardly accustomed to unique objects of the Middle East as seen in the exhibition, it is a real delight to discover these magnificent items. The Jerusalem pottery, olive wood and mother pearl creations are all hard to come by. Of course, some of them may exist elsewhere, but are either imitated or synthetic. To have the original and handcrafted pieces like those in the exhibition means 'Alaydi' is truly serious about its job.

The exhibition continues until 31st October, at the Jordan Craft Development Centre in Jabal Amman.

ON THE BOX



Soap with a difference!

By Ibtihal Ahmed
Special to The Star

HERE IS another soap about love, power, money and revenge, said everyone who saw the new Arabic series, "Diary of a General Manager." But how wrong they were, as they did not know what was in store for them! The series, currently shown on JTV, discusses the familiar issue of bureaucracy and red tape. This theme is not an alien one—it has been acted out, debated and presented in numerous documentaries and soap operas.

But none of the shows presented public institutions in such a light and entertaining manner. The series is set in one of the biggest government directorates. It tackles the issue of efficiency—or in this case, the lack of it—among government employees. Viewers are amazed at the bold revelations of the program, for it criticizes the inefficiency, corruption and sluggishness of public employees in a humorous way.

Night after night, Jordanians are glued to their TV sets after the 8 o'clock news to follow the latest developments of the newly appointed general manager. Dr. Ahmed is at first shocked at the state of affairs in his department, and tries all the time to change the way things are run in the directorate.

Because matters are in such a bad state, that Ahmed comes up with an original idea to reveal the faults of his employees. So he goes around the department incognito.

Sometimes you see him as a nosy old man who interferes in the business of applicants, monitoring the behavior and efficiency of the employees, who are sluggish, arrogant and dishonest. At other times the boss takes on the character of a worker in the department's cafeteria. It enables him to discover even more corruption and nepotism, even among the lower rank employees in the department.

The general manager knows there are some good and honest employees in the directorate—and he promotes to their rightful place. But to his dismay those few honest employees chose to turn a blind eye towards the bribery of their seniors, for fear of being dismissed. This leaves the manager on his own to deal with the employees and managers of his department and those affiliated to it.

His success in correcting some of the faults at hand proves to his employees—and to the viewers—that even one person can make a difference. He teaches us that we should have courage and should not stand for what is wrong and corrupt, because turning a blind eye to mistakes will only increase them, and the numbers of those who commit them.

Because of its refreshing and different style, many people like to watch this program. The role of the general manager is played by Syrian actor Ayman Zaydan who always plays the hero in a number of television programs. This role has surprised and delighted his fans, and shows that he is a creative and versatile actor.

Egyptian actress expresses dismay at state of theater

By Iham Sadeq
Star Staff writer

IS THEATER still a thriving force in the Arab World, and does it really serve as an outlet for everyday stresses and frustrations? These were just some of the questions The Star put to the famous Egyptian stage actress, Samiha Ayoub, who visited Amman last week.

Reflecting on the status of theater in the Arab World, Mrs Ayoub pointed out, "What we have today is not really theater, rather, it is a place where one can kill some time, or have a little laugh."

With her impressive background in theater (later moving onto movies as well), Mrs Ayoub should know. "Theater, as I used to know it, was an arena for cultural, social, political, and ideological messages; a mirror that reflects the state of society, showing all that is good, as well as what is rotten."

This is not to say that she is against comedy, which constantly pulls in larger audiences than dramas. "Comedies can be very rewarding, but they must convey a message to the audience; something that touches on the very essence of their lives," she added.

Samiha Ayoub's life has always revolved around the theater, even from



Samiha Ayoub

her early childhood when she used to recite the words from school dramas. Since then, the multi-talented artist has performed many different roles, characterizing both good and bad personalities, passive and active women, sincere

and dishonest roles, to name but a few.

However, she achieved fame through a radio series called 'Samarah,' which started her career in earnest. This led to two television series of her own: the agendas for which she took from the goings on in villages all around Egypt. Honored by the then President, Jamal Abdul Nasser, in 1964, Samiha Ayoub stressed that, "She was, is, and always will be a Nasserist, and proud to be so."

Asked whether she ever suffered from stage-fright, the feeling of confusion and fear felt by many stage performers on sight of the audience, Mrs Ayoub replied, "Every time I get onto the stage, I become nervous and confused, especially at the premiere performances. However, after uttering your first sentence, the fear vanishes and you can then perform to the best of your ability." "Mind you," she added, "I still feel that I am facing some kind of trial whenever I perform, always hoping that the verdict is a favorable one, of course."

Perhaps she is best known for her historical portrayal of Shajarat Al Durr, a lady who managed to rule during the Mamluk period for 80 days, after the death of the ruler, and husband, at that time. Ayoub speaks about such a role with pride. "A lot of people

said they related to this character," Ayoub enthused, "who was a strong lady, that managed to rule her country, whilst all the time concealing the death of her husband so as not to create a state of chaos, during what was then a very vulnerable period for the Mamluks." The strength of the character impressed many Egyptians at the time, captivating audiences and critics alike.

Whilst taking in the impressive reviews, Mrs Ayoub continued to lead an active personal life as well. She was married to the well-known pianist artist, Sa'ad Ad Din Wahba, best known for his nationalistic stance in support of Egypt and the Arab World. Today, Ayoub adopts an identical stance to her late husband, who died a year ago. "We were more than husband and wife, our relationship was so much stronger, and I will always support his stance against the normalization of ties with Israel," she maintained.

As president of the Egyptian Artists Association and the Cairo Film Festival, Wahba steadfastly refused to give access to any Israeli movies in Egypt, and he would blacklist any artist who visited Israel. His wife said she would always stand by her late husband's ideologies: "As long as Israel continues to occupy Palestine, I will never have an Israeli stamp on my passport."

Her recent two-day visit to the Kingdom was a response to an invitation from the Egyptian community in Jordan, to attend the performance of the play "Sikket Al Salamah" (The Path of Safety), which was showing in honor of her husband, on the first anniversary of his death.

AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ Paintings by 18 artists from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon at the Al Mashriq Gallery, Shmezzani. It continues until 1 November.

■ Under the patronage of HM Queen Noor, the Cervantes Institute is showing an exhibition entitled Goya's Caprichos. The exhibition will run until 23 October.

■ An exhibition by Laila Jamal at the French Cultural Center runs until 26 October.

■ An exhibition of masterworks by the Spanish Contemporary Architecture will be opened on 27 October at the Institut Cervantes. It runs until 6 November.

Films

■ A French film, titled Marche A L'ombre will be shown at the French Cultural Center on the 26 October at 6:30 and 8:30 pm. The film, from 1984, is about two friends who try to earn their living.

■ The American Center is showing The Firm (starring Tom Cruise) on 22 October, at 5:00pm.

■ The British Council will be showing Jack and Sarah on 27 October, at 6:00pm. The movie is headlined by Richard Grant and Samantha Mathis.

Workshop

■ The British Council is currently holding a number of workshops, discussing Modern English Literature. On 26 October, the Newer Voices-The Caribbean, will be reviewed at the auditorium from 5:00 until 7:00 pm.

Seminar

■ The Goethe Institut holds a special lecture on 28 October, about Women and their rights in living. The lecture will feature Mrs Renate Neubert, from the Berlin's Senate. Other Jordanian women lecturers will also take place. It will be held in English, at The Radisson SAS Hotel, between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm.

■ On 28 October, the American Center will devote its Media Forum to an examination of USAid programs intended to enhance economic opportunities in Jordan. The demonstration will be held at 4 pm.

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The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV
from 24—30 October.

Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 4634149): Mouse Hunt
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 4634149): The Peace Maker
- Galleria I (Tel: 079 33430): Saeedi At The American University (Arabic)
- Galleria II (Tel: 079 33430): Saeedi At The American University (Arabic)
- Plaza (Tel: 5699238): Saeedi At The American University (Arabic)
- Concord I (Tel: 5677420): The Game
- Concord II (Tel: 5677420): Up Close & Personal

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

- 3:00—Holy Koran
- 3:10—Animals (Cartoon)
- 3:30—Crowning Aroun
- 4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
- 4:30—Peer Pressure (Doc.)
- 5:00—French Prog
- 6:00—Wind at my back
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:15—French Prog
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:55—Murphy Brown
- 8:00—Stream
- 9:15—ABC of Democracy
- 10:00—News At Ten
- 10:30—Lynette
- 12:00—Twisted

SUNDAY

- 3:00—Holy Koran
- 3:10—Pink Panther (Cart.)
- 3:30—The Adventures of the Black Stallion
- 4:00—Discover The Wild Animals
- 4:30—Vid Kids
- 5:00—NBA
- 6:00—French Program
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:15—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:55—The Brittas Empire
- 8:00—French Program
- 8:30—Renegade
- 9:05—Farming & Ecology
- 9:30—Behind the Scene
- 10:00—News in English
- 10:30—Veronica Clare
- 11:30—Doogie Howser

MONDAY

- 3:00—Holy Koran
- 3:10—Batman (Cartoon)
- 3:30—The Gentle from Down Under (Drama)
- 4:00—Neighbors (Drama)
- 4:30—Last Frontiers (Doc.)
- 5:00—French Program
- 6:00—Wind At My Back



NBA Games, Sunday at 5:00 pm.

- 7:00—News in French
- 7:15—French Program
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:55—Parenthood
- 8:00—The Internet Cafe
- 8:30—Big Sky
- 9:10—Encounter
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Veronica Clare

TUESDAY

- 3:00—Holy Koran
- 3:10—French Cartoon
- 3:30—Bananas in Pyjamas
- 4:00—Life Choices (Doc.)
- 4:30—Small Talk
- 5:00—The Lions Kingdom

WEDNESDAY

- 3:00—Holy Koran
- 3:10—The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin

- 3:30—Halfway Across The Galaxy & Turn Left
- 4:30—Masters Of The Maze
- 5:00—French Program
- 6:15—Wind At My Back
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:15—French Program
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:55—Two Point Children
- 8:00—Envy Special
- 8:30—King-Fu
- 9:10—Great Moments Of Science & Technology
- 9:30—Faces & Places
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Chicago Hope
- 12:00—Bugs (Drama)

THURSDAY

- 3:00—Holy Koran
- 3:10—Superman (Cartoon)
- 3:30—Sliders (Drama)
- 4:00—Life On The Digital Edge
- 5:00—French Program
- 6:15—Sparks
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:15—French Prog
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:55—Family Matters
- 8:00—Great Romances of the 20th Century
- 8:30—Dr Quinn Medicine Woman (Drama)
- 9:10—Oprah Winfrey
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Film: True Crime
- 12:00—The Boys (Comedy)

FRIDAY

- 3:00—Holy Koran
- 3:10—Swiss Family Robinson
- 3:30—Treasure Hunt
- 4:00—French Film
- 6:15—The Simpsons
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:15—French Prog
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:55—Fresh Prince of Bel Air

- 8:00—Cinema, Cinema
- 8:30—Babylon 5
- 9:10—Everyman
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—The X Files (Drama)
- 11:10—The Halfpox

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

SAMEDI

- 17:00—Faut pas rêver
- 19:00—Le Journal
- 19:15—Magazine L'œil de Colomb

DIMANCHE

- 18:00—Bonne espérance
- 19:00—Le Journal
- 19:15—E-M6

LUNDI

- 17:00—Thalassé
- 19:00—Le Journal
- 19:15—Magazine scientifique

MARDI

- 18:00—Les cœurs brûlés
- 19:00—Le Journal
- 19:15—E-M6
- 20:00—Envyé spécial

MERCREDI

- 17:00—Ushuaia
- 19:00—Le Journal
- 19:15—E-M6
- 20:00—Envyé spécial

JEUDI

- 16:00—L'école des fans
- 19:00—Le Journal
- 19:15—Magazine L'œil de Colomb

VENREDI

- 18:15—Fort Boyard
- 19:00—Le Journal
- 19:15—Allô la Terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

Top Corner

F.R.I.E.N.D.S.
FOR LIFE
ON VIDEO



COLLECT THEM ALL

Top 10 Tapes

- There is something about Mary
- The Negotiation
- Rush-Hour
- Mask of Zorro
- Blade
- "Friends" Series
- Saving Private Ryan
- Sliding Doors
- The Avengers
- Snake Eyes

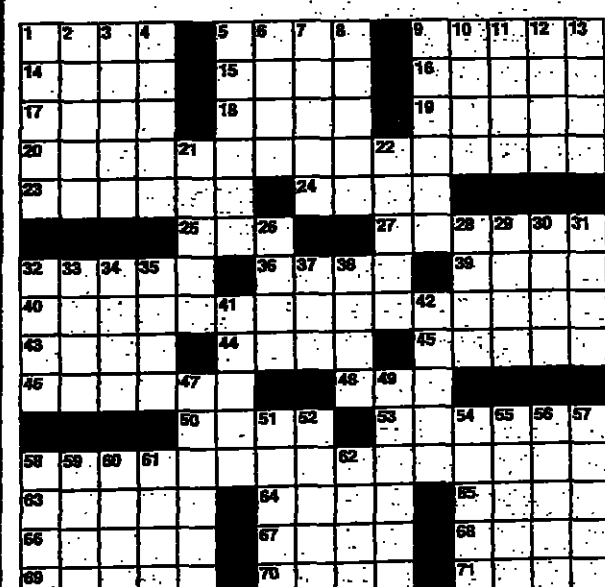
Top 10 Original

- Titanic
- Fallen
- Seven years in Tibet
- Jackal
- Fifth Element
- Tomorrow Never Dies
- Screem
- Devil's Advocate
- Amistad
- Mouse Hunt

VIDEO PLAZA

4th Circle opposite Belgium Embassy, Tel. 5930054
Open daily from 12:00 — 9:30

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- ACROSS
- 1 Delicate
 - 5 Breathing
 - 9 Grooves
 - 14 Rite
 - 15 Egyptian goddess
 - 16 Carri term
 - 17 Sedimentary
 - 18 Baseball glove
 - 19 Type of match
 - 20 Olfactory
 - 21 Drinks of liquor
 - 24 Paper's blade
 - 25 Poetically above
 - 27 Cause
 - 32 Auld
 - 36 Always
 - 39 Mostly base
 - 40 Fanciful stories
 - 43 Atlanta attraction
- DOWN
- 1 Endures
 - 2 Pertaining to birds
 - 3 Pablo Casals' instrument
 - 4 Organic compound
 - 5 Full of civics
 - 6 Like
 - 7 Supple
 - 8 Prohibit legally
 - 9 Kind of break
 - 10 Astronaut's need, at times
 - 11 Traveler's
 - 12 Of equal length
 - 13 Observed
 - 21 Atmospheric disturbance
 - 22 Harbor conveyance
 - 26 Genuine
 - 28 Of grandeur
 - 29 Window feature
 - 30 Dairy case
 - 31 Hatchery?
 - 32 Salsa
 - 33 Organized military
 - 34 Strains
 - 35 Give off
 - 36 Complete
 - 37 Ms. Bombard
 - 41 Thigh bone
 - 42 Implied but not expressed
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 - 58 Geometric figure: abstr.

—THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: The sun's in Scorpio, culminating in the great Scorpio holiday, Halloween. The moon's in Capricorn Monday and Tuesday, helping us all work harder.

Aries (March 21-April 19). Follow orders quickly and precisely. The action will be fast and furious and there won't be time to argue.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Travel with a partner or plan your next vacation: If you can't go yet, at least have dinner out at a foreign restaurant. Everyone seems cantankerous, even you.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). The money is available, if you know where to look for it. Start by reading up on the subject. Travel beckons, though work interferes.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). A partner's got a great idea. Encourage the other's creativity and you prosper, too. Do paperwork to get money and try to get off work early.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). The workload is tough, but don't complain. You'll have the help you need, especially if you set it up that way.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're intensely passionate and very lucky in love. Looks like that'll be fun. Make decisions at work to streamline your procedures.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Put money into household items. It's a good investment. An attractive admirer is impressed with your taste.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Practice new skills to advance in your career. Watch out for technical difficulties at home.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're in a practical mood, so make buying decisions. A secret source is your best bet. Study issues carefully before you make your decisions.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're strong and friends heed your advice. Make an investment in a dream you've long held hidden. It's just a question of saving your money.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're under pressure and it's pointless to resist. Go along with the program. You're stronger soon.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). Your friends provide inspiration, but you may wish you had a map to find your way through a maze.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: If you focus on learning this year, you'll surprise even yourself with your brilliance. The more you practice, the better you'll get, until you surpass all expectations.

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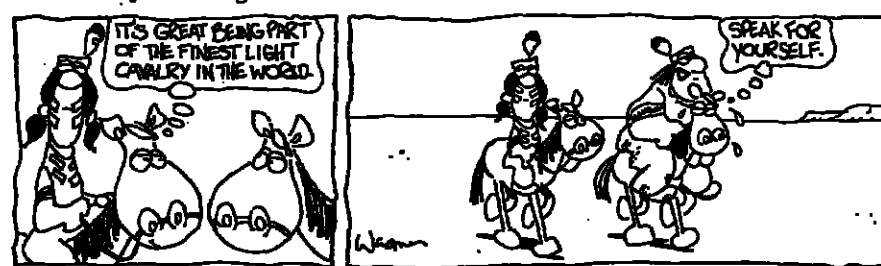
PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



ELWOOD by Ben Templeton & Tom Forman

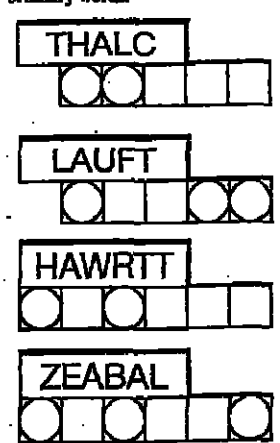


CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone



Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: A



Answer: A good thing to avoid on vacation is a flat.

Would You Believe...

There are nearly 2.6 million different poker hands that can be dealt from a standard deck of 52 cards.

The most frequently used letter in the English alphabet is the vowel "e."

The Battle of Britain was a World War II battle fought entirely by air.

The first Roman Catholic saint of the New World was Rose of Lima.

John Wilkes Booth, the actor who shot President Abraham Lincoln, was a star in his day — very popular among theater-goers before the assassination. He reportedly received many fan letters from women.

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CHARLIE



"Come right in, sir!"

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Les morts de Bab edh-Dhra' par Véronique Abu-Nijm

Pour l'étude de la préhistoire, les sépultures revêtent une importance particulière car elles sont souvent riches d'informations sur la culture et le mode de vie des populations. Aussi est-il régulièrement observé, dans notre région, que les populations sédentaires ensevelissent les défunts en laissant les corps intacts, alors que les populations nomades les désarticulent et rangeaient les ossements par catégories. L'exemple de Bab edh-Dhra' est particulièrement éloquent : l'occupation de la nécropole, l'une des plus vastes connues au Proche-Orient, est antérieure puis postérieure à l'occupation de la bourgade. Elle a duré du début à la fin du Bronze Ancien (3300-2100 av. J.C.) alors que la ville même ne fut occupée que de 2900 à 2300. Durant la période où la population s'est fixée, les habitants plaçaient les défunts dans un bâtiment rectangulaire reproduisant le plan d'une maison, appelé charnier par les archéologues qui y ont retrouvé des couches d'ossements parfois épaisses de plus d'un mètre. Des charniers ont livré jusqu'à environ 200 corps restes entiers. En revanche, les tombes datant des périodes



antérieures et postérieures à la fixation de la population sont d'un tout autre type : il s'agit de puits cylindriques de 1,5 à 2 mètres de profondeur. Du fond de ces puits on accède à de petites chambres circulaires dont les entrées sont scellées par de grosses pierres, et où reposent des corps désarticulés. Les os longs de plusieurs individus sont soigneusement amassés au centre de la pièce (voir ci-contre), alors que les crânes sont alignés sur un côté, et les offrandes sur un autre. Ce type d'ensevelissement trahit le nomadisme de la population qui toutefois se rendait régulièrement sur le site pour enterrer ses morts. Ce renversement de leur mode de vie est à mettre en relation avec la pratique de l'agriculture : une dégradation des conditions d'exploitation des sols a certainement incité les habitants à retourner à un mode de vie ancestral pour tirer meilleur parti de leur environnement. ●

Éclaboussures

Un rêve arabe

Le rêve arabe dont je parle est tout simplement une chanson. Une chanson qui exprime le sentiment de millions d'Arabes, leur désir d'avoir un seul pays, sans frontières, dans lequel ils pourraient tous vivre ensemble. Au cours d'une grande manifestation culturelle, des Arabes de tous les pays se sont réunis il y a deux semaines à Beyrouth, pour entonner haut et fort ce refrain aux allures de slogan : «Cela fut notre rêve / pendant longtemps / d'avoir un foyer / pour nous réunir / tous ensemble, tous ensemble». Et chacun d'espérer que ce rêve-ci deviendra un jour réalité. Selon les organisateurs, un million de personnes étaient présentes, rassemblées à Beyrouth pour l'occasion.

Le vidéo-clip de la chanson est lui aussi sans ambiguïté. Des scènes authentiques de la souffrance du peuple palestinien, et de la torture qu'il endure, appuient l'idée que le peuple arabe a assez souffert et qu'il aspire à vivre en paix, enfin réuni. Beaucoup d'artistes, de chanteurs et de chanteuses, venus de tous les pays arabes, ont participé à cette chanson, espérant qu'elle pourra produire un effet majeur sur l'évolution de la situation et des mentalités. Car c'est aussi un moyen d'exporter en occident l'image d'une réalité moyen-orientale dont les médias ne rendent pas toujours compte avec fidélité. Mais si les évolutions en matière de politique prennent du temps, les auteurs espèrent surtout que leur chanson fera évoluer les façons de penser des populations. Car si tous étaient d'accord pour que ce rêve se réalise, tôt ou tard, il deviendra réalité. Le monde arabe, uni par une même langue, une même culture, une même histoire, et une même religion dominante, n'a pas besoin de frontières. Depuis plusieurs siècles, notre région est le théâtre de conflits provoqués ou subis par les Arabes, mais les influences très lourdes de l'Empire Ottoman, puis des grandes puissances occidentales n'y ont pas été étrangères. Depuis, le monde arabe est artificiellement morcelé en plusieurs pays.

Jessica Batshone

Vous voulez écrire en français ?

Alors n'hésitez pas à collaborer à la rédaction du Jourdain. Que vous soyez passionné d'économie, de politique, de faits de société ou de culture, vos articles nous intéressent. Pour tout renseignement, contactez Stéphane Foucart au 5664153

Crise syro-turque

La presse turque au jour le jour

Au cours de deux semaines de crise syro-turque, la presse du pays d'Atatürk s'est littéralement déchaînée. En arrière plan du compte-rendu des tensions diplomatiques, une folle course-poursuite, celle du leader kurde "Apo", activement recherché par les services spéciaux et par une presse en mal de scoops.

Où est donc le mystérieux Abdullah "Apo" Ocalan, leader terrifiant et insaisissable du PKK, ennemi numéro un d'Ankara? Au tout début de la crise syro-turque, la question ne semble guère intéresser les quotidiens d'Ankara et d'Istanbul, qui tirent, le 2 octobre : «La Turquie informe la Syrie de son droit de représailles», ou encore, citant le ministre de la défense Ismet Sezgin, «La patience turque a des limites!». Le même jour, le quotidien Hurriyet annonce «Le déploiement de dix mille soldats des Forces armées turques dans la région de Tunceli», près de la frontière syrienne. Le journal profite de l'occasion pour dresser le bilan du mois écoulé, le PKK ayant perdu 72 hommes au cours de 63 opérations menées par l'Armée turque dans le sud-est anatolien. Le 5 du même mois, la plupart des quotidiens turcs, faisant état de la «tension entre la Turquie et la Syrie», citent un président Demirel «exaspéré», lançant à la face d'El-Assad : «Trop c'est trop, cela doit cesser!». Confortant l'exaspération turque, les quotidiens Sabah et Milliyet affirment quant à eux - sans citer leur sources - la présence en Syrie du mystérieux "Apo".

Mais la Turquie n'est pas seule. Et sa presse entend le faire savoir. Aussi, parmi des titres tels «Le PKK est entraîné à Damas» ou encore «L'attaque diplomatique de la Turquie», Sabah gratifie son lecteur d'un : «Les États-Unis lancent un

avertissement à la Syrie», soulignant le soutien américain aux projets de représailles turques.

En Irak

Ce soutien assuré, Hurriyet peut publier, le 7 octobre, un tonitruant article sous le titre «Nous ne bluffons pas!», dans lequel des sources décidément non citées confirment la présence de "Apo" en Syrie ce qui risque, selon le journaliste de Hurriyet, «d'amener à une très

sérieuse confrontation».

Le 8 octobre, la tension semble à son comble. «Dernière chance pour la Syrie» voit-on dans la presse, tandis que de son côté, Milliyet, dans un article intitulé «Le peuple syrien a peur du PKK», tente de rallier la population de son voisin arabe à la cause de l'État turc. Et le terrible "Apo"? La presse ne l'oublie pas, mais pour la première fois, elle publie une interview laissant entendre que le leader kurde ne se trouverait pas en Syrie. Interrogé par Mil-

liyet, le docteur Ghias Anis, consul de Syrie à Istanbul, affirme en effet que «Abdullah "Apo" Ocalan ne se trouve pas en Syrie, mais quelque part dans le nord de l'Irak». Ce même 8 octobre, Sabah se lance pour sa part dans une délicate aventure journalistique, proche de la science-fiction.

À Damas

Le quotidien publie en effet un article intitulé «La Turquie sera victorieuse», dans lequel il

cite abondamment Clifford Beal, rédacteur en chef du *Jane's Defence Weekly*, un magazine britannique de stratégie militaire. Selon Clifford Beal, «si la guerre se déclare, la Turquie frappera la première et un cessez-le-feu sera décrété grâce à une intervention internationale. (...) L'armée turque est en très bonne condition et peut s'appuyer sur son personnel, sa discipline et son équipement, [alors que] l'armée syrienne, handicapée par des équipements trop vieux, n'est pas bien entraînée. Les armes les plus terrifiantes dont la Syrie dispose sont ses armes chimiques et biologiques, mais les utiliser serait pure folie». La conclusion de Beal est sans appel : «dans tous les cas, la Turquie sera victorieuse». Dans la même édition, Sabah enfonce le clou de la suprématie turque en rendant compte de l'arrestation de 500 citoyens syriens travaillant pour le PKK, avant d'ajouter que «leur traduction devant les tribunaux militaires [avait] déjà commencé».

Le 9 octobre, étant cette fois sa source en la personne des services de renseignement turcs (le MIT), Hurriyet titre «Apo est toujours à Damas» et ajoute avec un étonnant luxe de détails, que le terroriste aurait même «rencontré, quatre fois dans la semaine, des responsables militaires syriens». Rien à faire, les révélations du Hurriyet ne prennent pas, et les rumeurs vont bon train sur le lieu de villégiature de "Apo", à tel point que le 13 octobre, cité par Sabah, Vartan Oskanyan, le ministre arménien des Affaires étrangères, nie la présence de "Apo" dans son pays.

En Russie

Coup de tonnerre le lendemain. Alors que le grand quotidien *Cumhuriyet* fait sa Une en titrant «La patience turque à bout», il cite, dans un second article, Ismet Sezgin (ministre turc de la défense) et titre : «Le leader du PKK n'est pas en Syrie». Dans la foulée, Hurriyet cite un «haut responsable» des services spéciaux israéliens (le Mossad) et annonce : «"Apo" est en Russie!».

"Apo", en Russie? Info, intox? Le petit monde de la presse s'interroge et cette «chasse à l'homme» virtuelle reprend de plus belle. Le 15 octobre, dans ses colonnes décemment bouillonnantes, Sabah interroge no Sezgin de plus en plus sollicité, qui affirme que «rien ne permet de dire que "Apo" se trouve en Russie», et que «les seules informations disponibles permettent uniquement d'affirmer qu'il ne se trouve pas en Syrie». C'est presque sans conviction que Hurriyet titre ce même jour, citant Cem (le ministre turc des affaires étrangères) : «La Turquie est déterminée». Et pour cause, le lendemain (16 octobre), presque rien ne venait rappeler la guerre terrible à laquelle la Turquie avait échappé. Excepté ce titre de *Hurriyet*, exposant la position officielle arménienne : «Nous sommes opposés à l'indépendance kurde». "Apo", lui, doit peu s'en soucier. Il court toujours et la presse a, semble-t-il, renoncé à savoir où il se trouvait. ■

Le Jourdain

Jeux panarabes

Pour une poignée de dinars

Préférant manifestement investir massivement dans les infrastructures plutôt que dans l'entraînement de ses sportifs, le gouvernement jordanien provoque la colère des fédérations.

L'an prochain, la Jordanie accueillera les IXèmes Jeux panarabes. Mais malgré les quatre millions de dinars débloqués par le gouvernement pour permettre aux fédérations sportives de préparer l'entraînement, rien n'a encore réellement commencé. D'un côté le gouvernement pense avoir rempli sa part du contrat mais de l'autre, les fédérations estiment dans leur ensemble que les crédits débloqués ne suffisent pas à assurer aux sportifs un entraînement de qualité. «Nous pensons qu'il est préférable pour les équipes de s'entraîner hors de Jordanie, confie Fouad Qaddomi, responsable des fédérations sportives, c'est à dire dans d'autres pays arabes voire en Europe. Nous estimons donc à un minimum de 200.000 dinars le budget nécessaire à chaque fédération».

Or chaque fédération n'a reçu qu'une somme variant de 150.000 à 200.000 dinars, jamais plus. Plus gourmand que Fouad Qaddomi, Mudar Maj-

doub, président de la Fédération de basket-ball s'est vu allouer une subvention de 185.000 dinars alors que selon lui, «200.000 dinars sont nécessaires pour l'entraînement à l'étranger et l'achat du matériel».

Tout le monde participe

Quant à la situation de la Fédération de boxe elle n'est guère plus brillante. Son président, plus radical encore que Mudar Majdoub, menace carrément de suspendre la participation de ses sportifs à ces prochains jeux. «Nous ne voulons pas voir se reproduire une situation semblable à celle des Jeux qui se sont déroulés au Liban l'année passée, lance-t-il. Nous avions été obligés de réclamer un rallonge de plus de 3000 dinars sur lesquels seuls 2500 nous ont été accordés par le gouvernement».

Le gouvernement jordanien a pourtant estimé sa contribution totale à plus de 11 millions de dinars, sans compter les aides

des autres pays arabes, soit 200.000 dollars, ni l'aide apportée par la Ligue arabe, soit un million de dinars. Le tout étant, il est vrai, destiné à l'entraînement mais aussi et surtout à la construction des infrastructures nécessaires à l'accueil tant des sportifs que des spectateurs.

Piscine olympique

Et pour cause, ces installations sont censées changer l'image sportive de la Jordanie, d'un point de vue régional et international. Entre autres, une nouvelle salle omnisport, dont la construction est estimée à plus de 2 millions de dinars, sera construite dans la cité des sports. Elle pourra contenir plus de 7000 spectateurs et fait espérer au directeur de la cité sportive qu'elle «permettra à la Jordanie, après la tenue des Jeux panarabes, de prétendre à l'organisation de compétitions internationales de haut niveau». Pour conforter ses espoirs, une nouvelle salle de gymnastique et une piscine olympique doivent également être construites.

En marge de ces préparatifs d'ordre purement matériel, se cache le problème politique de la participation de l'Irak, toujours sous embargo. Si beaucoup s'interrogent encore sur cette éventuelle participation, le porte parole du ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports affirme quant à lui que «la compétition concernant tous les pays arabes sans restriction, la participation de l'Irak à ces IXèmes Jeux panarabes ne sera pas remise en cause».

Sammy Abbadi

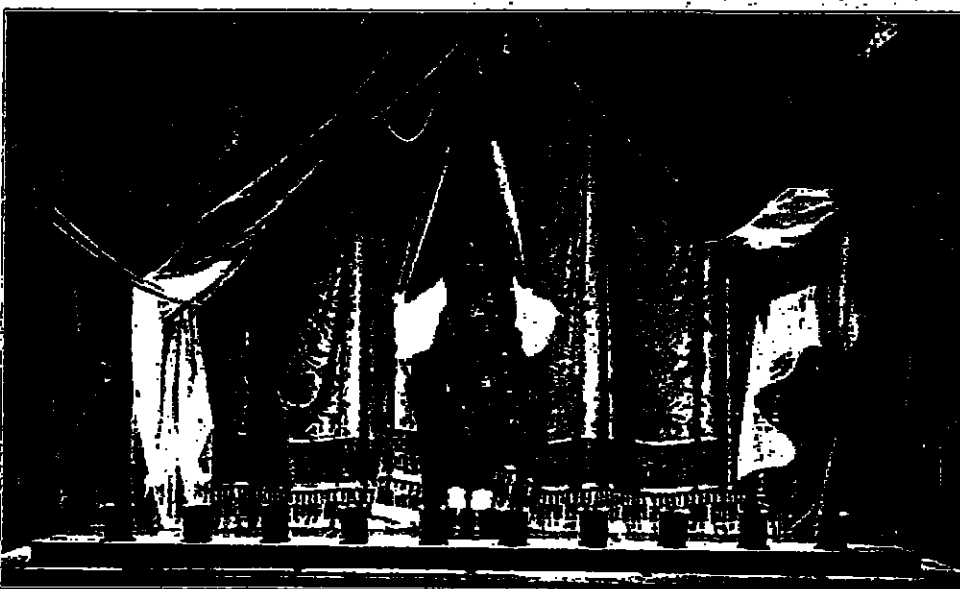


Le gouvernement jordanien a estimé sa contribution totale à plus de 11 millions de dinars, sans compter les aides des autres pays arabes, soit 200.000 dollars, ni l'aide apportée par la Ligue arabe, soit un million de dinars.

Culture

Molière invité à Amman

Après la Syrie et l'Irak, la Troupe du Binôme et François Rancillac arrivent à Amman pour jouer *George Dandin* ou le mari confondu, une pièce majeure et méconnue d'un immense homme de théâtre.



Un décor imposant pour un classique du théâtre français pour la première fois à Amman.

«S'il hurle à qui veut l'entendre qu'on le fait cocu, c'est surtout pour réclamer justice, pour dénoncer l'aveuglement du monde et la violence sociale, pour témoigner de sa douleur et de son manque, pour qu'on le reconnaisse pour ce qu'il est : un être humain, au moins, tout simplement...» Ainsi évoquée par le metteur en scène François Rancillac, *George Dandin* ou le mari confondu, de Molière, peut paraître une pièce austère, mais c'est avant tout d'une comédie qu'il s'agit. Même si le comique a ici des accents presque tragiques.

Lorsqu'il épouse Angélique, *George Dandin* ne pense qu'à la particule qu'il n'a jamais eu. Riche mais roturier, il tente par cette alliance de s'élever de l'état de simple bourgeois à celui de noble. C'est à la fois l'histoire de cette tentative et celle de la désunion de son couple qui font le corps de la pièce. Par ce biais, Molière évoque une société où

l'ascension sociale et l'attrait de l'argent ont force de loi. Car si d'une part Dandin épouse Angélique pour accéder au monde de la noblesse, la famille de son épouse n'en veut, elle, qu'à son argent. C'est donc une société empreinte de traverses absurdes et d'hypocrisie que Molière dépeint dans *George Dandin*. La structure de la pièce se découpe en une sorte de trypique : Dandin et l'honneur des nobles, Dandin et la liberté d'Angélique et Dandin humilié.

Fin du voyage

Et si la trame de l'oeuvre prend appui sur les principes sociaux en vigueur dans la France du XVIIIème siècle, les personnages et les situations créés par Molière gardent toute leur pertinence, au-delà des époques et des cultures. Par ailleurs, l'interprétation de *George Dandin* qui sera mise en scène par François Rancillac au Centre culturel royal bénéficiera de surcroît en

arabe pour permettre à chacun d'avoir accès à cette grande pièce souvent méconnue du répertoire classique français.

Pour Denis Toupin, directeur du Centre culturel français, jamais représentation d'une pièce du répertoire français n'aura bénéficié de tels moyens, notamment au niveau des décors. Malheureusement, poursuit Denis Toupin, le nombre d'acteurs (douze) et l'ampleur de ces décors sont tels que la pièce ne pourra être jouée hors d'Amman, malgré la volonté du Centre culturel français d'exporter ses activités culturelles hors de la capitale. Ainsi en avait-il été de concerts organisés à Mafraq, de représentation théâtrales données à Aqaba, ou encore des spectacles organisés à Irbid. Mais Amman sera, en quelque sorte, pour François Rancillac et la Troupe du Binôme, la fin du voyage. Après une représentation en Irak et deux en Syrie, c'est en effet la capitale jordanienne qui verra la dernière représentation de ce chef d'oeuvre de Molière. ■

Anan Shaikh Nasereddin



Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, dit Molière, a été l'auteur de pièces dont les thèmes traités ont accédé à l'universalité.

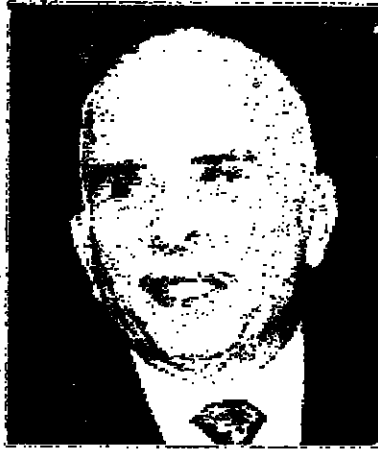
Le mot de la semaine

«Roi»

Si un roi est sans couronne, il n'est pas roi. C'est la définition même du mot. Mais, dans la langue arabe, le mot «roi» a une signification plus large. Il désigne tout homme qui a une autorité sur un groupe de personnes. C'est pourquoi, dans la Bible, on trouve des rois qui ne sont pas des rois au sens strict du terme. C'est le cas de Salomon, qui était un sage et un juste, mais qui était aussi un roi. C'est aussi le cas de David, qui était un héros et un guerrier, mais qui était aussi un roi. Dans la langue arabe, le mot «roi» a donc une signification plus large que dans la langue française. Il désigne tout homme qui a une autorité sur un groupe de personnes.

Le Rajastan, le pays des rois. Bizarrement, le grec n'a pas retenu cette racine pour désigner le chef, mais a emprunté aux populations autochtones de la mer Egée un terme tout à fait différent, basileus (à l'origine du français basilique). Il utilise toutefois cette racine «raj» dans le verbe reger, rendre son esprit vers, désigner. Or, dans le français scientifique, anagora, le monarque d'origine. En allemand, le «-g» de reg- s'est palatalisé en «-j» : Reich, le royaume. Reich, le droit, riche, correct, équivalent de l'anglais right. Cependant, les langues germaniques ont utilisé une racine différente pour le nom du roi qui se dit König en allemand et king en anglais.

Véronique Abu-Nijmeh

Sa Majesté
Hussein de
Jordanie.

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

Cycle Les années 80.

Marche à l'ombre film de Michel Blanc (1984), couleur, avec Michel Blanc et Gérard Lanvin. Deux copains tentent de survivre en faisant la manche et en acceptant des petits boulots plus ou moins louches. Séances au Centre culturel français le lundi 26 octobre à 18h30 et 20h30.

Théâtre

George Dandin ou le mari confondu de Molière, mise en scène de François Rancillac. Le 25 octobre au Centre culturel royal, à 20h.

Société

Famine : la controverse jordanienne

Dans une étude publiée en 1997, un sociologue jordanien évoque la situation des plus démunis, et parle ouvertement d'une famine jordanienne. Une étude aux conclusions controversées qui fait néanmoins le jour sur les difficultés d'une frange de la population à se nourrir correctement.



Après une distribution de rations alimentaires par une des nombreuses ONG présentes dans le sud du pays.

Pendant qu'une certaine Jordanie construit, se développe et s'alimente correctement, une autre Jordanie a faim. Pour Mohammad Al-Sagor, sociologue et chercheur jordanien, on parle de famine lorsque «le manque de nourriture en quantité suffisante se fait sentir. Son étude, publiée en 1997, sur la famine en Jordanie, montre que près de 9% de la population souffre de ce mal silencieux. Même si - selon la même étude - la famine en Jordanie, qui adopte des formes chroniques, ne provoque pas directement la mort des populations concernées. «Il faut accepter la réalité, explique-t-il, mais la réalité jordanienne est différente de celle d'autres pays plus pauvres. Si certaines personnes se privent de manger pour quelques jours, les cas où elles sont privées de nourriture pour des durées plus longues sont rarissimes. Mais s'accroît sur les critères qui permettent de parler de famine n'est pas sans soulever une polémique sur le sens des mots. «La famine n'est ici pas aussi dramatique que dans certains pays d'Afrique, poursuit le sociologue, mais c'est grâce à l'aide d'associations humanitaires, du gouvernement, et de certains pays voisins. Plus nuancés dans leur propos, Karim Hatz, directeur de Caritas Jordan, Franck Chomarat, coordinateur de Première Urgence, et Blim K. Udas, directeur du Programme alimentaire mondial (PAM), affirment quant à eux que la Jordanie n'est pas touchée par la famine mais par la malnutrition. Une malnutrition qui entraverait, selon eux, au sein des classes à faibles revenus, une incapacité à travailler normalement. D'où le cercle vicieux : moins de travail, moins de revenus et

moins de revenus, moins de nourriture. Mais que l'on parle de famine ou de malnutrition, il n'en reste pas moins que toute une frange du peuple jordanien connaît des difficultés à s'alimenter normalement. Ces franges de la population sont essentiellement constituées de paysans sans terre, d'ouvriers agricoles, de chômeurs non qualifiés, mais aussi de pasteurs nomades et de veuves sans travail ni famille.

Selon Al-Sagor, c'est le sud de la Jordanie qui est le plus touché : dans la région de Karak, 8,2 % de la population qui est concernée. A Balqa, ces chiffres atteignent 7,7%, 7,4% à Mafrq, 6,7% à Irbid, 5,8% à Tafleh, 5,4% à Ma'an, et 4,6% à Zarqa. Mais la famine n'est pas un mal uniforme. Elle prend une forme différente suivant les pays, et parfois suivant les régions d'un pays. Parfois au sein d'une même famille, il arrive que certains souffrent de la famine et d'autres pas.

Avec environ 15 à 20 % de la population au chômage, l'absence d'emploi - qui représente le plus grand problème

de la société jordanienne - est peut-être à l'origine de ce fléau. Mais la profusion de salaires à très faible revenu n'y est pas étrangère non plus : il n'est pas rare, en Jordanie, de voir des familles vivre avec moins de 100 dinars par mois. «J'ai cinq bouches à nourrir, confie Youssef, et mon salaire n'est que de 80 dinars par mois. Je travaille la nuit dans un hôpital comme standardiste, mais la journée, je fais des petits boulots pour arrondir les fins de mois. De plus, la tendance à se marier très jeune accentue la tendance à

avoir plus enfants, tendance déjà forte chez les populations les plus pauvres, c'est-à-dire celles qui ont des difficultés à se nourrir. Certaines statistiques indiquent que plus de 11,5% des familles pauvres ont plus de 6 enfants, contre 5,3% des familles les plus riches. Le taux de fécondité élevé est donc assurément l'une des causes majeures de l'émergence de la famine en Jordanie. Et malgré toutes les initiatives du gouvernement, et l'effort fait par les services sanitaires, de nombreuses personnes pensent qu'elles n'ont

coup d'enfants ne constitue pas un problème, et que les méthodes modernes de contraception vont contre l'islam. «Je préfère utiliser les méthodes naturelles, confie Rania, mère de six enfants, et pas la pilule ou les autres méthodes de contraception. Je ne peux pas refuser la vie à un bébé parce que je ne veux pas d'enfants. Allah aidera les nouveaux nés. Un important travail d'information reste donc à mettre en œuvre auprès des familles les plus pauvres.

Amineh Ishtay

Distribution alimentaire dans le sud

La Jordanie reçoit la Jordanie des Organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) est essentiellement alimentaire et médicale. Généralement, elle est coordonnée par le gouvernement jordanien, via le Ministère des affaires sociales qui fournit aux organisations des listes de familles dans le besoin.

Le Programme alimentaire mondial fournit quant à lui une aide technique aux populations. C'est à dire que sans opérer directement des distributions de nourriture, il enseigne aux agriculteurs des tech-

niques plus efficaces et leur fournit les semences. Charge à eux de récolter puis de vendre le fruit de leur récolte. Mais il faut parfois parer au plus pressé : les associations Première Urgence et Echo fournissent aux populations des rations de nourriture de base : farine, sucre, riz, huile.

Les états débilissants des populations les plus en détresse peuvent être ainsi évités. Jusqu'à présent, trois distributions ont été réalisées dans le sud du pays, à Karak, Aqaba et Tafleh. D'autres associations,

telles Caritas-Jordan, qui opère depuis la fin de la guerre des Six jours, ou encore Médecins du monde, travaillent à réduire la part de la population touchée par la malnutrition. Mais outre son activité de coordination des ONG, le gouvernement n'est pas en reste : des coupons correspondant à des rations de sucre, de riz ou de farine sont distribués tous les trois mois aux familles les plus démunies, ainsi que des allocations de 25 dinars par famille.

A. L.

Quand les pingouins entrent en religion

L'île des pingouins, un roman français d'Anatole France, publié pour la première fois en 1908. En prêt au Centre culturel français.



«Maël, issu d'une famille royale de Cambrie, fut envoyé dès sa neuvième année dans l'abbaye d'Yvern pour y étudier les lettres sacrées et profanes. A l'âge de quatorze ans, il renonça à son héritage et fit vœu de servir le seigneur.»

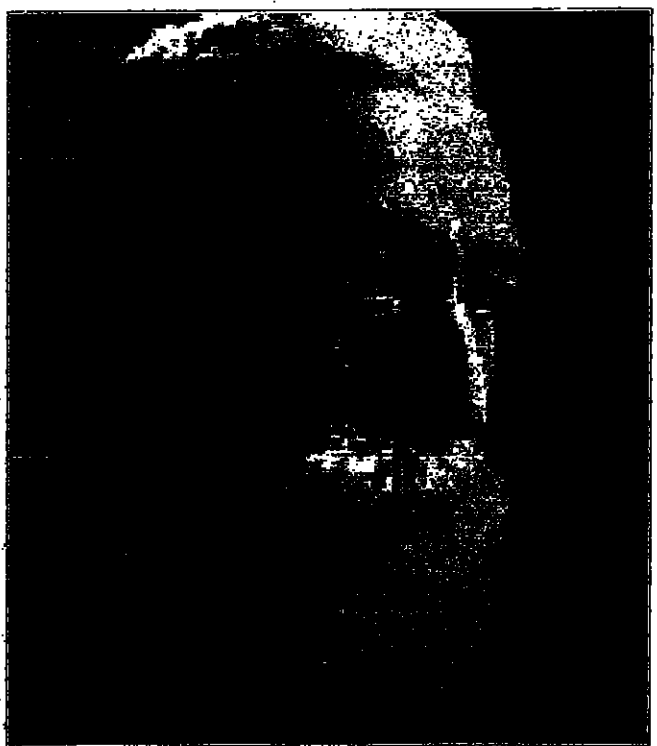
C'est avec cette phrase que l'on s'engage dans la lecture de L'île des pingouins, et, dès le premier paragraphe, le lecteur ressent un sentiment ambivalent fait de répulsion et d'attraction. Car si une atmosphère pessimiste règne sur tout le livre, et si une sorte de grisaille entoure tous les personnages, le lecteur a le sentiment d'être sur un tapis volant qui parcourt les siècles depuis la première page jusqu'à la dernière.

Dans un premier temps, le récit évoque l'histoire et l'origine des personnages qui vont accompagner le lecteur. Avec ironie, Anatole France montre un «saint Maël» handicapé par sa faible vue qui, accostant par hasard une île peuplée de pingouins, baptise et évangélise ces derniers les prenant pour des hommes. Cet événement cocasse provoque le chaos dans la communauté ecclésiastique qui décide finalement de considérer ces animaux comme des hommes. Par là, Anatole France élabore sa propre humanité qu'il manipule comme une marionnette pour nous montrer l'évolution de la société au cours des siècles, l'homme passant peu à peu de la simplicité et de la bonté à la malice, au vice et à la ruse. Comme le dit l'un des personnages : «... puisque la folie et la méchanceté des hommes sont inguérissables, il reste une bonne action à accomplir. Le sage amassera assez de dynamite pour faire sauter cette planète.»

Au cours de cette promenade à travers les siècles, on découvre que l'homme devient de plus en plus avaré, malin et égoïste. Anatole France dépeignant la réplique exacte de la société corrompue qui l'entourait. Ainsi, s'inspirant de la réalité pour amener la fiction, il évoque de façon à peine déguisée l'affaire Dreyfus. Tout au long de onze chapitres, France évoque le procès de «l'affaire Pyro», juif condamné à la prison pour avoir volé du foin à la cavalerie et l'avoir ensuite vendu à l'ennemi, crime qu'il n'avait pas commis. La similitude avec l'affaire Dreyfus est saisissante, et par ce biais, celui de la fiction, France nous impose sa réalité.

Mais le roman ne s'arrête pas à l'évocation du présent. Le futur imaginé par France est encore plus détestable que toutes les époques passées. Le «progrès» se manifeste selon lui «par l'industrie meurtrière, la spéculation infâme, le luxe hideux...» «La capitale, poursuit-il, revêtait un caractère cosmopolite et régulier. C'était l'apogée. Dans une dernière image biblique évoquant Sodome et Gomorhe, la ville explose et disparaît. Tout est à recommencer.

Tatiana Qatani



Anatole France a reçu, en 1924, le prix Nobel de littérature, pour l'ensemble de son œuvre.

Hommage

Hosni Fariz, en vers et contre tout

Son franc-parler n'était pas toujours apprécié et il se méfiait du pouvoir. Hosni Fariz avait tout pour être un poète gênant.

Mort

En janvier 95 (1), le poète et écrivain Hosni Fariz a été l'une des figures marquantes de la vie culturelle jordanienne. Trouble-fête génial, sa vie est passée par les vicissitudes qui sont habituellement le lot des penseurs anticonformistes. Issu d'une famille modeste - son père est tailleur de pierre - il naît en 1907 dans une Jordanie encore ottomane, où c'est le turc et non l'arabe qui est enseigné à l'école. Jamais il ne s'est caché de ses origines populaires et a plutôt eu tendance à les revendiquer, gage d'une responsabilisation dont il a toujours dit avoir bénéficié. A cette époque la Jordanie ne bénéficiait pas d'un rayonnement culturel comparable à celui de l'Égypte ou du Liban, mais la venue du Prince Abdallah, en 1921, bouleversa quelque peu la donne régionale. En 1923, le territoire actuel de la Jordanie compte quarante-quatre écoles où c'est bien la langue arabe qui est enseignée. Bénéficiant de cette nouveauté culturelle, Hosni Fariz est élève à l'école secondaire de Salt, avant d'être envoyé à l'Université américaine de 1927 à 1932, où il achève ses études de littérature et d'histoire. Ses diplômes en poche, il devient professeur de littérature arabe, d'histoire et de géographie.

«Mis à la retraite»

Adulé par ses étudiants, son attitude, empreinte d'indépendance et de franchise, a tendance à gêner ses collègues et ses supérieurs. Des rumeurs de grèves lui sont attribuées et il est aussitôt muté à Karak. C'est sur ce pion rocheux que naît véritablement sa vocation de poète et d'écrivain. Un jour, dans une rue de la

petite ville, son regard croise celui d'une femme. Depuis ce jour le démon de l'écriture, qui ne devait jamais le quitter, le prend et en 1938 il publie son premier recueil de poèmes en arabe. Devenu directeur de l'école secondaire de Salt, il est nommé inspecteur d'Académie, «un domaine où je ne comprenais rien», avait-il coutume de dire. Il est «mis à la retraite» en 1952 mais bien vite, il reprend du service, comme secrétaire d'État à l'éducation. Il continue à écrire, inlassablement, des recueils de poèmes stigmatisant son incompréhension du monde, sa distance aux choses.

«Les voilà tous en politique!»

Mais en 1963, son franc-parler et son indépendance d'esprit lui valent une fois de plus une «mise à la retraite».

«Comme je n'avais pas peur de la prison, je disais toujours la vérité. Depuis le tout début, depuis mes tous premiers poèmes jusqu'à aujourd'hui, j'ai toujours passé mes nuits à dormir la conscience tranquille.»

Concevant une sorte de méfiance pour le monde du pouvoir, sa réelle vocation est pour les lettres. Il dira plus tard, avec un peu d'humour, de ses amis Ahmad El-Louzi, Ahmad Tarawneh, Bahjat Talahouni et Abdel Salam El-Majali, «les voilà tous



«Comme je n'avais pas peur de la prison, je disais toujours la vérité. Depuis le tout début, depuis mes tous premiers poèmes jusqu'à aujourd'hui, j'ai toujours passé mes nuits à dormir la conscience tranquille.»

en politique!». Profitant de ses longues heures de tranquillité et de solitude, il continue à publier des recueils de poèmes, signe des traductions et rédige trois manuels scolaires, tous interdits. L'un d'eux, cependant, est utilisé - encore aujourd'hui - en Chine. En 1973, on retrouve sa signature dans le quotidien El Rai, ainsi que dans de nombreuses autres revues. Influencé par les grands poètes tels El-Moutanabi, Shawqi ou encore Beshara El-Khouiri, il fut peu avant sa mort décoré par le roi

Hussein du Grand prix de l'État. Plus tard il confiera : «Mon rêve était que je ne sois que poète. C'est la vie qui m'a contraint à faire autre chose.»

Sonia Qatani

(1) Ce portrait a été réalisé grâce à un entretien avec Hosni Fariz, accordé à notre collaboratrice Sonia Qatani, peu de temps avant la mort du poète.

The Star Stadium

Edited by Abdul Hamid Adgasi

Dan Tully wins Ad Dusstour Golf Championship



Mr. Kamel Al Sherif presents the Winners Trophy to Dan Tully

Amman (The Star)—Mr. Kamel Al Sherif, chairman of the board at the Jordanian Company for Mass Media and Publication, patronized the closing ceremony of the 7th Ad Dusstour Golf Championship, held at Al Bisharat Golf Club.

In all, there were 30 players who took part in the championship, comprised of Jordanians, ex-pats and members of the various diplomatic missions in the Kingdom.

American Dan Tully won the Championship Cup with a round of 69, collecting the prize for the longest shot of the tournament as well.

In the low handicap competition, Francis Shafek from Chinese Taipei came first with a round of 66. He was followed by Jordan's Hanafi Abu Haswa in second place, and John Pascoe—the British-Bank director—in third place.



Mr. Kamel Al Sherif on the putting green

In the high handicap competition, Paul Kadicaud from Denmark obtained first place with a round 67. Two Chinese Taipei players, Ass Yank and Najeeb Shoo took the second and third places. Denmark's Elga Kadicaud won the Ladies Competition.

Pan-Arab Games update

French experts called in for the opening and closing ceremonies

Mr. Sata'an Al Hassan, the Minister of Youth, discussed with the French ambassador the possibility of sending French experts to help in the preparations for the opening and closing ceremonies at the next Pan Arab Games.

The opening and closing ceremonies play a major role in depicting a successful games, and they give the host nation the chance to display its history and culture to the whole world.

Al Khaymi assures Jordan's ability to host the games

Mr. Ziyad Al Khaymi, the director of the Pan Arab Games that were held in Beirut last year, visited Jordan last week. In order to see how the preparations were going.

He met with the heads of all the various working committees, and passed on his valuable organizing knowledge.

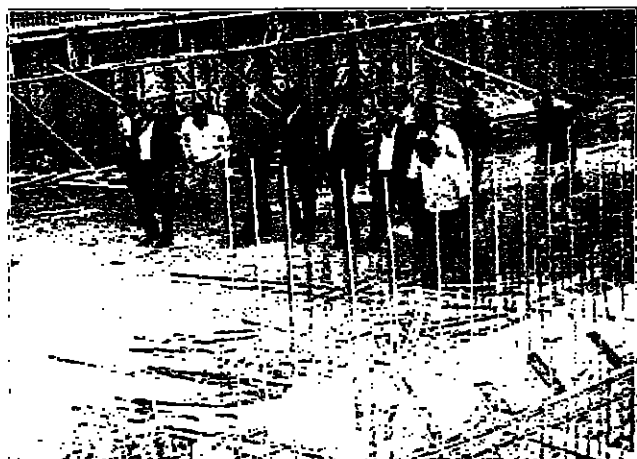
He also held a press conference, where he outlined the essential requirements for hosting the games. He encouraged all journalists to concentrate on positive criticism, and to modernize their reporting techniques. He reiterated how important the Pan Arab Games are to the region, and what an opportunity it was for Jordan to give a good image.

He suggested that maybe the number of events should be reduced—down to 18 events for men, from the proposed 26, and 8 events for women—to ensure that the schedule is a realistic one.

Finally, he applauded the Jordanian decision to invite experts from past Pan Arab Games, which he said was a unique idea, and one which ensured that the mistakes of the past would not be repeated.

Basketball team wants to play

The Jordanian Basketball Federation is searching for a new training hall, after Al Orthodoxy Club Management



Officials inspecting the site of the new Sports Hall

decided to close the club's basketball hall for renovation purposes.

This is just one more problem facing the Jordanian Basketball Federation, following the national teams recent poor showing in the William Jones tournament in Taiwan. The boycott by Al Jazeera club was partially to blame.

Council of Ministries

approved the new Sports Hall tender

The Council of Ministries has approved a recent decision taken by the Tenders Committee of the 9th Pan Arab Games.

The Tender Committee—headed by Mr. Nidal Al Hadeed, the head of the Greater Amman Municipality—accepted a bid to build the new Sports Hall at Al Hussein Sports City, at a budget of JD 4.3 million

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Cyclists 6th in Al Jolan Tour

The Jordanian Cycling team could only obtain sixth position (out of seven teams), following the recent Al Jolan international team race, which was held in Syria last week.

"It was a good opportunity for the team to assess the level of competition, following a protracted absence on the international scene," said Mr. Sharari, the head of the Jordan Cycling Federation.

Egypt were the eventual winners of the race, with Algeria second, and Syria third.



Mr. Majdoub, the Jordanian Basketball Federation President, who resigned his position following the poor performances of the national team

NBA work stoppage a necessary evil

IF YOU think the NBA work stoppage makes no sense, ask yourself these questions: Is the league in good shape? Does it have any problems? The answer, of course, is no, the league isn't in such hot shape. Yes, it does have problems. Big problems.

There are the ticket prices, now well beyond the reach of many average fans who might want to go to a game.

There are the absurdly large contracts being routinely given to young, decent but over-hyped players, such as Kevin Garnett and Juwan Howard.

There is the public's antipathy for the league's new generation of stars—and the fame and wealth those stars accumulate long before they accomplish anything, rendering winning a lot less important.

Oh, and don't forget the stories about widespread marijuana use reported in that noted scandal sheet, the *New York Times*.

Other than that, everything is swell.

In other words, the NBA is sick. For all the money pouring in—the players and owners split US\$ 1.7 billion last year—this is a league that needs help. A league that needed to

start doing things differently.

Hello, work stoppage.

As annoying as it is in the short run, and as damaging as it could be in the long run if most or all of a season is wiped out, it needed to happen.

You know the old saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it"? Well, the NBA was "broke." It needed fixing. High-end salaries are out of whack. The league's image, exclusive of Michael Jordan, is increasingly terrible. The public was becoming disdainful of pro hoops long before these labor woes.

Something had to happen. Now, maybe something will. Like putting marijuana on the list of banned substances, for instance. Duh.

Or raising the team payroll "limit" from \$27 million to \$45 million within four years, as NBA Commissioner David Stern has proposed. It's hardly a lowball offer.

If there's a rooting interest in this unseemly mud fight, a keeper of the game's flame, it's Stern.

No, he's not without blame, and yes, he's the one who chose to reopen the labor agreement and chart this suicide course. But he had the league's best interests in mind.



Football Roundup

French 1st division match reports

Nancy (0) Rennes (1)
Ten-man Nancy lost its unbeaten home record to a side gaining its first road win. Coach Paul Le Guen's side scored through his former Paris St. Germain teammate Edouard Cisse.

Sochaux (1) Metz (1)
Metz had their hopes of a first victory dashed by Sochaux captain Olivier Baudry's equalizer three minutes into injury time in the clash of the basement teams featuring the worst defense at home against the worst attack.

Monsaco (2) Montpellier (0)
Monsaco gave one of its most rounded performances of the season despite missing several key players through injury as the best defense in the division kept one of the most prolific attacks quiet. Two first-half goals by Robert Spehar proved decisive.

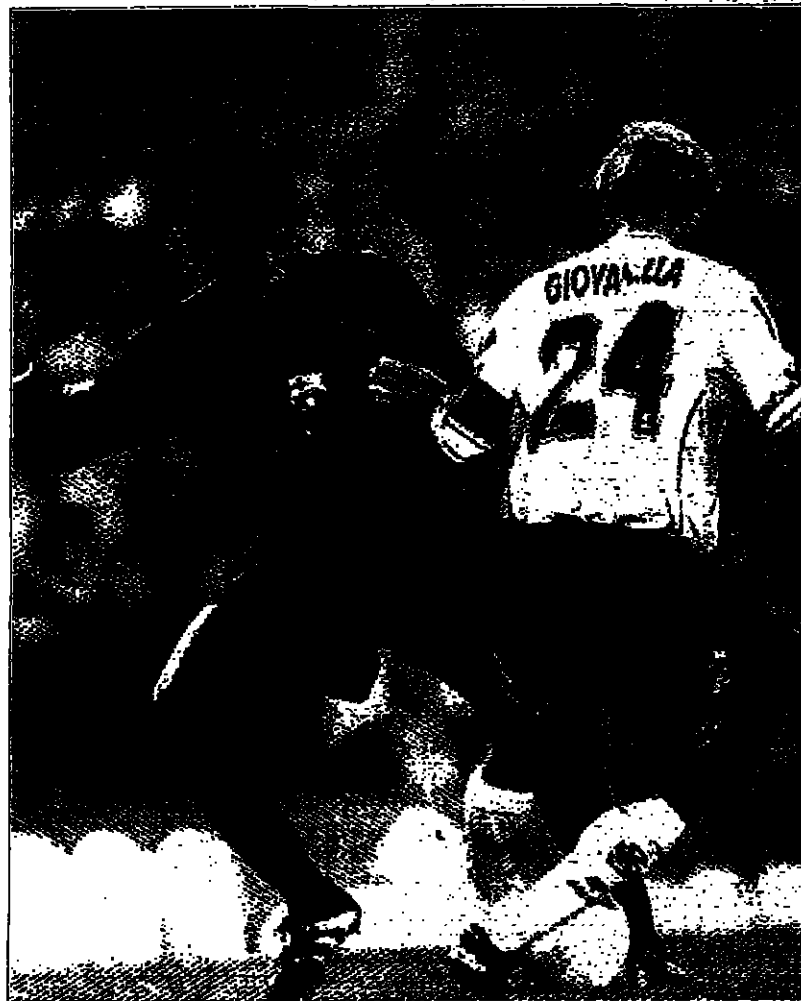
Lorient (0) Le Havre (0)
Le Havre picked up their first road point as Lorient failed again in their efforts for a first top flight home win.

RC Lens (2) AJ Auxerre (2)
Auxerre were unable to give coach Guy Roux a first away victory a day before his 60th birthday. Lens should have won but two-goal striker Wagneau Eloi missed a hat-trick when he shot wide with two good second half chances. Wagneau Eloi got both for Lens.

Bordeaux (2) Nantes (0)
With Ali Benarbia and Johan Micoud back in the team after missing Bordeaux's only defeat at Bastia, the leaders recovered their best form. They settled the match with two goals in less than two first half minutes by Johan Micoud and Kaba Diawara.

Strasbourg (0) O. Marseille (2)
Marseille took time to settle and was lucky not to concede its first road goal when ex-midfielder Teddy Bertin hit the post early on. But once into their stride they won easily with two goals from Florian Maurice either side of halftime.

O. Lyon (1) Paris St Germain (1)
PSG, again under pragmatic coach Arraz Jorge, eked out a good result with 10 men after the dismissal of midfielder Pierre Ducrocq. The last time PSG won at Lyon was under Jorge in their 1993-94 championship season.



Patrick Kluyvert of Barcelona challenges for the ball with Everton Giovanna of Salamanca

Italian 1st Division match reports

Inter Milan (3) Lazio (5)
Lazio's start belied a side that had not won a single league match this season as Marcelo Salas nudged home Sinisa Mihajlovic's second minute freekick. Ex-Lazio player Aron Winter levelled the scores in the 22nd, only for Sergio Conceicao's 36th minute header and Roberto Mancini's 41st

minute volley to give the visitors an unlikely 3-1 lead at half-time. Inter's comeback hopes took a tumble in the 45th with the sending-off of Diego Simeone. After the break, Conceicao added his second and Pavel Nedved made it 5-1 in the 75th. Only substitute Nicola Ventola's fourth and fifth goals of the season in the dying minutes reduced the arrears. In the final act of a dramatic evening, Nedved was sent-off.

Bari (1) Udinese (1)

Udinese looked destined for their second away win when Alessandro Piccini put them ahead in the 68th minute but the visitors threw it away in the dying minutes.

First, Valerio Bertoni was given his marching orders for a second bookable offence, then Jonathan Spinesi out-jumped a depleted Udinese defence to head home a 90th-minute equaliser from Mauro Bressan's cross.

Cagliari (1) AC Milan (0)
Tiziano De Parre gave Cagliari a 19th-minute lead, reacting quicker than anyone after Bruno N'Gotti's defensive header landed lamely in the six-yard box. The home side should have gone further in front in the 27th minute when German goalkeeper Jens Lehmann gave away a penalty. But Sebastian Rossi, brought on for the injured Lehmann, saved Roberto Muzzi's shot.

Twelve minutes later Alessio Scarpì did the same with Oliver Bierhoff's lacklustre spot-kick and Milan's hopes of a share of top spot disappeared.

Perugia (1) Venezia (0)

Ronato Olive's 45th-minute shot brought

Perugia their first win since returning to Serie A and condemned Venezia to their fourth defeat in five matches. The Venetians have yet to score since winning promotion for the first time in 30 years.

Placenza (4) Sampdoria (1)
Veteran defender Pietro Vierchowod, aged 39, put Placenza into a third-minute lead, only for Argentine playmaker Ariel Ortega to win and then convert a 28th-minute penalty to level the scores. But the home side took command in the 42nd minute when Simone Inzaghi, brother of Italy international Filippo, converted the second penalty of the match.

Second-half goals from Gian Paolo Maneghetti and striker Massimo Rastrelli mean Samp have now conceded 10 goals in three matches.

Vicenza (1) Juventus (1)
Juventus coach Marcello Lippi has never won at Vicenza and must have feared the worst when Edgar Davids deflected a 40th-minute free-kick into the path of Lamberto Zauli, who scored with ease. But Alessandro Del Piero, scorer of two goals for Italy against Switzerland last weekend, has rediscovered his prowess in front of goal. In the 45th minute, he was perfectly placed to turn in Filippo Inzaghi's header for his first league goal since last April. The visitors played the last 21 minutes with 10 men after Alessandro Birindelli was sent off for his second bookable offence.

Parma (2) Salernitana (0)

Parma, which had scored only once in four matches this season, looked set for another goalless draw until attacking midfielder Pierluigi Orlandini replaced captain Antonio Benarrivo in the second-half, helping to spark goals by Enrico Chiesa in the 71st minutes and Diego Fuser nine minutes later.

AS Roma (2) Fiorentina (1)

Leader Fiorentina, which won its first four matches, was on the verge of five in a row after Gabriel Batistuta scored in the 31st minute and Roma had two players sent off in the second half. But the Florence club grew complacent after peaking Brazilian Edmundo was substituted late in the second half and Roma turned the tables with last-gasp goals by Russia's Dmitry Alenichev and Italy's Francesco Totti.

Empoli (0) Bologna (0)

Bologna, which created several chances, protested vehemently after Swedish striker Kennet Andersson's first half header hit the bar and then bounced on the goal line. The referee ruled the ball had not crossed the line but a television replay appeared to show otherwise.

Spanish 1st Division results

Deportivo Coruna (4) Oviedo (0) Mallorca (2) Alaves (1) R. Santander (3) Extremadura (1) Valladolid (2) Espanyol (1) Athletic Bilbao (2) Valencia (0) Atletico Madrid (2) Tenerife (0) Barcelona (1) Salamanca (1) Real Betis (0) Celta Vigo (3) Villarreal (1) Real Sociedad (1) Real Zaragoza (3) Real Madrid (4)

English Premier League results

Arsenal (1) Southampton (1) Chelsea (2) Charlton Athletic (1) Everton (0) Liverpool (0) Manchester Utd (5) Wimbledon (1) Middlesbrough (2) Blackburn (1) Newcastle Utd (2) Derby (1) Nottingham F (1) Leeds United (1) West Ham Utd (0) Aston Villa (0)

German 1st Division results

E. Frankfurt (2) B. Leverkusen (3) Schalke 04 (1) Bayern Munich (3) B. M'gladbach (0) Nuremberg (2) VfB Stuttgart (0) Hertha Berlin (0) Hamburg SV (4) Duisburg (1) W. Bremen (2) SC Freiburg (3) 1860 Munich (2) VfL Bochum (1) Kaiserslautern (1) Wolfsburg (1)

THE STAR'S WORKSTATION COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

Computer & IT companies!

Welcome to The Star's Workstation, the absolute source on what's hot and what's not in Jordan's IT market. Email us at Star@nets.com.jo or start a new compo with your news and views.

Microsoft launch Arabic Windows 98, next week

MARKING ITS world-wide debut, Microsoft's Windows 98 Arabic Edition, the key platform for Arabic language computing, is to be launched and will go on sale at Dubai's GITEX '98 information technology exhibition.

The launch is being co-ordinated between Microsoft Gulf and the Dubai World Trade Centre, the organisers of GITEX.

Windows 98 Arabic Edition will be launched with a series of activities and promotions under the banner "Windows 98 @ GITEX '98", including retail promotions at the Computer Shopper show.

"We see great value in working with Microsoft to launch Windows 98 at GITEX '98," said Wahid Attalla, general manager of Dubai World Trade Centre. "GITEX is the premier regional information technology industry platform, and Windows 98 Arabic Edition is another great milestone in Arabic computing for Middle East users. Windows 98 at GITEX '98 will provide visitors with an even greater sense of excitement, and will give our exhibitors new momentum to do business at the show."

Retail promotions at Computer Shopper will include free limited edition T-shirts for the first 1,000 buyers of Windows 98 Arabic Edition, as well as a range of special offers, bundles and promotions from Microsoft resellers and vendors of computer systems and peripherals.

In the GITEX hall, a wide range of vendors will be exhibit-

ing products and technologies built around Windows 98 Arabic Edition, including software, hardware and peripheral vendors. As well as showing solutions, many are offering visitors incentives to adopt the new operating platform.

The launch of Windows 98 Arabic Edition has been greeted with unprecedented support from the regional computer industry, as well as users. Initial demand has already exceeded that for Windows 98 Interna-

enable a new generation of multimedia support in today's PCs, and Windows 98 Arabic Edition realises the potential of those technologies. In Arabic, for users in the Middle East today.

We see this launch as a major step forwards for Arabic language computing in the Middle East today," commented Intel Middle East general manager, Gilbert Lacroix.

Further evidence of broad industry support for the new release of Windows in Arabic comes from Compaq Computer MEMA regional director, Dr. Walid Montemur, who said: "Compaq's Prestario are machines for the home, education and small business user that have the future built in, and which support a wide range of exciting, multimedia technologies. Every new Prestario shipped at GITEX and after in the Middle East region will be shipped with the option for users to install Windows 98 Arabic Edition at no charge, and will support the operating system flawlessly and will consequently deliver new value, features and empowerment to our users."

In addition, selected models in the Compaq Armada portable range, including the Armada 1700, will ship with Windows 98 Arabic Edition pre-installed.

Windows 98 Arabic Edition supports a wide range of new generation peripherals and facilities, including DVD video, television, USB peripheral devices and other key components and computing technologies.

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Making an impact on the regional level: Arabist Search Engine

ARABIST is a pioneering company, which has basically served all economic sectors, whether governmental, semi-governmental, professional associations and private businesses in almost all fields.

Arabist delivers a full Internet marketing service to its clients, utilizing the power of the Internet to serve their different needs. Arabist views its relation with its clients as one of partnership, aiming to increase client revenue through the Internet.

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Aspirin free accounting, from Jamsheed

JAMSHEED ACCOUNTING and management software is an international class software package, produced by a Jordanian software house.

Comsoft have over a decade of software development expertise and have dedicated their effort to introduce the most reliable solutions to the Middle East market. Under the slogan of "aspirin free accounting and inventory control", Comsoft are applying this philosophy.

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Comsoft built Jamsheed on a solid base of object oriented pro-

gramming and C++, in accordance with the ISO 12007 standard.

Jamsheed serves as part of point-of-sale systems and applies barcode technology.

As for integration, Jamsheed manages flawless integration

between accounting and inventory control, with wide scalability from simple accounting to client/server spread-out network architecture.

For more information on Jamsheed, contact ComSoft at 5693789 or fax 5680713.

News update

Microsoft to 'take a dive' in lawsuit

The shocking news reported throughout last week, is that Microsoft may prefer to take a dive and intentionally lose its case against the Justice Department, regarding the Internet Explorer and Windows 98 issue. Being called the 'IT trial of the century', the whole issue revolves around Microsoft's alleged anti-trust practices by which it attempted to lock out competitors from the browser market, by packaging every copy of its Windows 98 operating system with a copy of Internet Explorer as standard.

This legal battle has been raging since the beginning of the year and looks set to come to a close for now, later to be appealed. It seems that legal

advisers of Microsoft believe that the company can in the case in the court of appeals, with different judges and a whole other set of legal issues.

So, Microsoft seems to have given up on convincing the current judge that it has not performed anti-trust practices.

Badalna launch at METS

Global One's new local information and media service, Badalna, is scheduled for launch at METS '98, in the first part of November.

Badalna is co-produced with Arabia.OnLine and will provide Global one subscribers with an added value service of news, culture, and entertainment. For more information, contact Global One at 5697777.

INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

GITEX time again!

IT IS GITEX time again, and the Jordan IT industry is bustling with preparations. People are getting ready to 'go down to Dubai' next week, to show their products, services and possibly 'cut a few deals'.

GITEX, the Gulf Information Technology Exhibition, held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) every year, is the largest computer and information technology event, attracting tens of thousands of computing professionals and specialists from all over the world.

For Jordan's computer professionals, it represents an opportunity to seek new horizons for business outside the country, particularly in the Gulf states.

Software exporters, in particular, are gearing up as this event represents a golden opportunity to meet most key people in one place, at the same time! Also, GITEX attracts huge numbers of potential corporate and business clients.

As for some of Jordan's companies, who are regional hardware dealers for a variety of products, you can expect that they won't let a chance like GITEX pass them by!

In fact, it would be a fair guess that more flights heading to Dubai from 27 to 29 this month, will be packed with members of the country's IT and computer community on board! Here, as is the case every year, we need to stop and think for a moment whether we will ever have a computer show in Amman which comes anywhere near the magnitude of GITEX, in terms of its influence on the region.

Naturally, with Dubai being the new business center for the Middle East, an exhibition there would take center-stage.

However, surely, Jordan could be the host to a major information technology event, covering the Levant markets, and maybe Egypt along with them. Our part of the region is still lacking a seriously powerful exhibition.

Recently though, there have been a couple of worrying signs that the regional computer forces will probably shift away from us.

The Dubai World Trade Centre, organizers of GITEX every year, announced that a new special GITEX event would be held in Cairo, starting this April.

This is truly a groundbreaking development. It's a pity that it is not taking place in Jordan. What's more, Lebanon is witnessing a resurgence in terms of trade exhibitions.

So, where does that leave us? I suppose, we've still got METS, the annual computer event organized by the Jordan Computer Society. This year, METS is to start on 9 November, meaning that it is not so distant from GITEX as far as its timing is concerned; but that's probably the only characteristic of METS which comes close to GITEX!

Getting back to GITEX, as would be expected, most companies have plans to announce new products, plans or developments at GITEX and it should be expected that a lot of awards, special promotions and celebrations will be taking place! The most important characteristic of GITEX is that it brings Middle Easterners together. In any case, one thing will probably stand out this year for Jordan's hardware and software exporters. Their main concern is how to find the best mechanisms to enter Gulf markets successfully. After around a decade of trying, the best results have been only achieved by those who literally re-located a part of their staff into the Gulf.

True, it will be costly at first, but it should pay back in the long run. A shining example of success in this field is SEDCO, a Jordan-based company, which now has Dubai headquarters. It was a hugely successful move. SEDCO definitely deserves to be commended for its business sense.

Maybe others should follow suit, after all, that will support Jordan's export economy and, who knows, maybe it will elevate our regional importance enough to host a massive regional exhibition, called FIATEX (Finally In Amman Technology Exhibition)! ■

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From the classics

Johann Sebastian Bach

By Rasheed Al Roussan
Special to The Star

WHEN YOU stand in front of an ocean, you can sense its majestic beauty, its bluish figure, and its unforgettable aroma. The scent takes your breath away; you plunge your self into its depths.

The most seductive thing is the sound of its waves, splashing on rocks and sandy shores. You hear them, and you don't. Mesmerized by their foamy echoes, your spirit swings into a lullaby of sound and silence.

Sound and silence, sound and silence. This is the divine magic of music, the epitome of all arts.

Even though oceans aren't found everywhere, their elegance permeates every work of art. Music has always been an ocean of its own, encompassing a rich diversity of styles and themes, and translated into a universal language of sounds and voices, that became spoken by everyone.

One of the most famous and complicated genres of music that paved its way into history is classical music.

However, for many, the word "classical" is blurred. For instance, Handel's compositions aren't classical, neither in style nor to the period to which they belong to. The classical period began in Europe in the Middle Ages. It was a movement of philosophies, advocating reason and intellect. Eventually, literature, art and music became intermingled within this train of thought.

The classical style was born in Vienna through the hands and minds of composers like Franz Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Ludwig Van Beethoven. Those were the first to create a storm of eternal musical pieces that make great music today.

However, classical music hadn't come out of the blue, but it was part of overall development of western music.

It all started with the Baroque period in the 16th century. Even though this era was dubbed as the epoch of religious belief, it argued that it was during this time that the whole concept of Western music was born.

Repetition, harmony and tonal variations were just some of the characteristics of the Baroque period.

A second distinct stage of the development of music occurred in the

17th Century. The stress now was on originality, innovation, style and musical themes. This form of music went through radical changes since the birth of the German composer Johann Sebastian Bach in 1685.

Bach descended from a great family of composers that produced at least 53 musicians over seven generations. Young and hyperactive, Bach received his first musical instructions from his father, Johann Ambrosius, a town musician.

In 1703, he became a violinist in a chamber orchestra. Later, Bach moved to Arnstadt to become a church organist. In the coming years, Bach acquired all the musical knowledge he needed to start a career. With his superior talent as a composer and performer, his compositions

added new life to the concepts of harmony, polyphony and counterpoint.

The magnitude of Bach's music lies in his ability to use polyphony, which consists of two or more simultaneously sounding parts on a large scale of flexibility and innovation. Counterpoint on the other hand, is derived from the Latin word punctus—literary meaning "point against point."

In music, it is melody against melody. Imagine a vertical line, where musical notations are spread out, each melody will follow the other, repeating the same theme, but with different tonal variations and speed to create a pattern of harmony and color.

The counterpoint master has left a mark on every type of music which belonged to that period. He composed for the organ, harpsichord, and the violin.

What is surprisingly however, is that after his death, Bach's music was neglected for about 80 years. The revival of his works was due to Felix Mendelssohn, a famous mid-19th century composer who re-arranged and performed one of Bach's greatest works, the Passion of St. Matthew in 1829.

Baroque music influenced composers like Mozart and Beethoven, which enthused color to the classical era.

Bach served as the guiding star for all who became interested in the history and styles of western music.

Today, the German composer is revered, studied and appreciated by many. His mastery made him the father of music. In the coming weeks, The Star will focus on individual composers who left their imprints on great music.



Bach

The early morning appetizer

JTV's 'A New Day' program

By Ghassan Joha
Special to The Star

DURING THE eighties, the idea of media transparency was out of the question. Today, however, the visual and print media has developed greatly, creating a standard of credibility and innovation never seen before in Jordan.

"Fresh and to the point," is the motto of JTV's "A New Day"—a breakfast program, launched more than three years ago.

With an daily early morning broadcast schedule, you may think twice about waking up at 6.30 am, to sit in front of the TV set for two hours. But believe it or not, there are thousands who do just this everyday.

The first TV snack starts with a half-an-hour buffet, that includes a news bulletin, a weather forecast and a press commentary.

But the main dish is yet to come. After a couple of songs, the program's set turns into a circle of ongoing debates. Interviews include ministers and high-ranking public officials, which paves the way for a wide range of stimulating discussions.

"By holding such meetings, we present a level of quality, intellectual dialogue, which provides the public with the truth and nothing but the truth," Lana Mamkegh, one of the hosts of the program, told The Star.

However, many still agree that such programs are still in need of greater dynamism and creativity, especially regarding the presentation and the quality of topics in these programs.

In addition to this, it is argued that the quantity of the material must be more diversified, which in the end will lead to a balanced diet of national and international coverage.

"Our goal is to give people an honest picture of what is happening around them," said Jareer Maraqa, the other host of the program.

He told The Star that JTV is trying hard to provide a better coverage especially of social



Lana Mamkegh (L) and Jareer Maraqa (R) during an interview on JTV's "A New Day."

and political issues so that they give greater credence to transparency. This should pave the way for greater interaction between the public and the government.

The morning talk show is today widely successful among the public. This is due to the endless efforts of Maraqa and Mamkegh who have been hosting the program for the past year and half.

The morning show is strong on case issues. It has, for instance, put the spotlight on such things as the increasing casualties from shootings during weddings, car accidents and social work, and the need for charities to channel their funds into more productive projects.

The program has launched a special slot to alert the public to the dangers of car accidents on the road, and of the need to take extra precautions whilst driving.

But the success of "A New Day" also lies in the spirit of

the team work. Starting from the director, cameramen, sound technicians and ending with the key grip holders, the atmosphere is one cooperation.

Maraqa stresses that many challenges continue to face the program. These are in terms of maintaining the level of broadcast material.

When it went on the air in 1995, most people believed that the program was just another copy from a neighboring TV station.

However, this was not the case. The breakfast program really has grown into a home-grown indigenous product, that is proving hard to emulate.

"The different types of people we interview are selected from the demands of the public, who suggest what we ought to be discussing. We go through the process of gathering complaints from all over the Kingdom, by phone calls and conversations with the

public," Maraqa explains.

Unfortunately, the past year and a half has not all been plain sailing. There has been criticism of what some would say is the "routine nature" of the program. While there are established slots that deal with light issues such as workouts or dietary habits, the program is short on innovation.

One critic said, "After all, this is television, and TV work means constant change and creativity. You need to think of new ideas all the time to keep the viewer interested."

Despite the fact that both Maraqa and Mamkegh are widely known for their long experience in the media, the show is missing some of the flavor of fieldwork—going out into the streets, interviewing and talking to people. This used to be tackled by the program's previous presenters, Caroline Faraj and Mohammed Wakeel.

The technical quality of the program needs to be improved as well. During this cycle, fewer cameras are used and less funds have been allocated to the program.

While the presentation is good, some are weary of what they term as the rhythm of the interviews. However, Maraqa sometimes does go on, because you can't put a time limit or prevent a minister from talking. However, we can interrupt them by putting forward further comment, so that our views interact with what they are saying.

But in the end the responsibility falls upon the team as a whole, depending on their willingness to venture into new horizons. Both hosts assured The Star that field work will be stepped up.

For sure, a new dawn will rise tomorrow. While you are enjoying the warmth of your bed, think of those who are preparing your visual breakfast; a meal that is fresh, creative and mildly biting.

Ex-detective stars in 'One Tough Cop Inc.'

By Dan Morrison

NEW YORK—Question: Which of the following death-defying, fame-garnering, testosterone-charged stunts were actually performed by retired New York City Detective Bo Dietl? Circle as many as you can believe.

A. Slept with a mob boss' mistress.

B. Slung shots of booze with Fat Tony Salerno.

C. Solved the brutal rape and torture of a nun.

D. Punched out a rival detective on live television.

E. Shook hands with George Bush.

F. Helped a Mafia prince shoot heroin.

Once upon a time he lay in the freezing cold, his exuberant face mashed into some urine-soaked East Harlem sidewalk, the winter wind cutting through him like whatever it is the winter wind feels like when you are hanging out on the street, trying your best to look drunk and vulnerable.

He was bait, feigning unconsciousness, waiting for some flighty entrepreneur to come and try to steal his wallet, his rings, maybe even his fillings. When the mark made his move, Bo Dietl and his partners, Jackie Freck and Tommy Colleran, would spring into action and make the arrest. Bo would serve the shell a couple of knuckle sandwiches to keep him quiet on the way to the Tombs downtown. Then they'd go out for a dozen drinks or so.

"Those days were like heaven," he says. "It was good versus evil out there, and we were the like evil to the evil."

Those days. It is a twice-told tale, to say the very least, and it flows without pause in Dietl's New York patois as he pulls onto the FDR Drive in Manhattan for a tour of the neighborhood where he made his reputation as a kind of demented supercop.

Life, apparently, is very good. Cruising up the drive in his BMW 750i sedan, Bo makes cooing chit chat on the car phone with a model who is recovering from some kind of surgery. He makes a date for drinks with his buddies for later that night at the Four Seasons. After that, it's dinner at the delicious and exclusive Rao's restaurant in East Harlem, where the likes of Donald Trump and you and me are regularly turned away like orphans. Not bad for a former decoy cop. It would, for the purposes of this story,

be nice to have Bo Dietl express some kind of shock at his current station in life. The ear strains to hear the millionaire private investigator, real estate mogul and alligator shoe-wearing gad-about-town utter one of the standard my-goshisms, like "Never in my life, especially when I was face down in urine in freezing East Harlem, did I imagine that I would one day own a big-time private investigation firm and be producing the motion picture story of my life." But he doesn't say that. Because he did.

"He always wanted to be at the top, be the biggest," says Freck. "It suits him. It suits his image."

Now, more than a decade since he retired from the New York City Police Department and his scarred and starry life was first optioned by Hollywood, Bo Dietl is about to take the Big Step. Bigger than the jump from cop to suit, or from middle class to upper class, Bo Dietl is making the jump from fact to fiction. With the release last week of "One Tough Cop," movie audiences around the country are seeing a cop named Bo Dietl doing all sorts of things that Bo Dietl never did.

In the hulking, pumped up form of actor Stephen Baldwin, Bo Dietl will solve the nun case all over again, just like he did in the 1988 best-selling book "One Tough Cop" and in untold conversations over a microphone, a vodka martini or a plate of pasta.

To make a long and absolutely thrilling story short, Bo and his partner Tommy, outraged by the brutal rape of a Carmelite nun on their turf in East Harlem, spent three days in 1981 pounding the pavement and slinging back drinks in a quixotic try at nailing the perpetrators.

Building on the tiniest of tips—passed on to Bo from his friends in the Mafia—the pair solved the nun case and humiliated the NYPD's detective elite. Expecting to be hailed as heroes, Bo and Tommy are instead whipped like dogs for their unbelievable cheek, but eventually the truth gets out. That's the story and he's sticking to it.

More or less. But the movie adds a few, um, enhancements. There's Bo's rocking affair with fictional Mafia moll Josephine O'Hara, in the form of actress Gina Gershon. It never happened, but, as Bo says, "She sure is easy on the eyes."

There's Tommy (called Duke Finerty in the movie, played by Chris Penn) and



The film "One Tough Cop" is loosely based on the story of former New York Police Department Detective Bo Dietl

his \$20,000 in gambling debts. Actually, according to Bo, Tommy had something of a surging drinking problem, owing to the fact that he was about to get flopped from detective to patrolman over six grand in unpaid parking tickets. Tommy was a trifle miffed by Bo's portrayal of

him in the autobiography as a rather determined barfly ("Where the... did we go, to the ice cream parlor?" says Bo), so his character was refashioned by the screenwriters.

God only knows how Colleran will react to seeing himself gunned down by

the mob on the big screen. "You know, they did a little Hollywoodization of the thing," Bo says.

And there's Bo's on-air walloping of a rival detective who tries to take credit for solving the nun case. "I did punch a few people out, just not on camera," he says. Dietl seems comfortable with these changes. He has long since passed the point of fusing his public and private personas. He is One Tough Cop. And, not unlike Buffalo Bill, Roy Rogers and one Madonna Louise Ciccone before him, he is also a product. One Tough Cop Inc.

Few say he hasn't earned it. "Whatever he got, he worked for," Freck says. "The difference between me, Bo Dietl and other detectives? There are hundreds, if not thousands, of guys that are as good as a detective or, maybe, better detective than I ever was," he says. "But the big deal is, when you get a big case like that, your notoriety is brought up. And it's a shame, because some guys will never be at the right place at the right time to be involved with these cases."

"I always say that I was no better than anybody. But, everything I did, I did to the max," he says. "I never did it halfway."

"One Tough Cop," the movie, is not the first time the nun case has made it onto the big screen. In 1992, Harvey Keitel played an out of control, drug-dealing and sex-addicted cop in the film "Bad Lieutenant." One of the movie's subplots involves the rape and torture of a nun.

Bo had a bit part in that movie, as he has in several other films. But the Dietl product line includes more than just private investigations and million-dollar movies. On 1 November, jittery parents across the globe will begin shelling out cash for "One Tough Computer Cop," an Internet baby sitter designed to keep online pornography, hate speech and other unmentionables from reaching the minds of unsuspecting children.

In 1986, Dietl ran and lost as a Republican novice for a seat in Congress. He's very high on former President Bush, and his office on the 35th floor of the News Building on 42nd Street is decorated with several photographs of Bo and George. The view extends from the core of the city, over the United Nations, all the way to the low-rise streets of Queens.

It was there that a young Richard Dietl gained his nickname by forgetting every-

body's name and calling them "Bo" instead, and it was there that he began palling around with the sons of Mafia bosses, even helping a few inject heroin while hanging out near the railroad tracks. It was an association that would bring him both years of boozy camaraderie and the ire of police brass.

In his autobiography, Dietl describes his fervent days as a rookie cop in Queens: "I had this feeling—if I could arrest everybody doing every crime in New York, I would have done it. I was a psycho on a mission."

But for Dietl, at least when it comes to the mob, a murderer is not a murderer unless you see him pull the trigger. The rest of the time?

"I grew up in a neighborhood where organized crime was a way of life," Dietl says, repeating a line from the movie, and the book, and god knows how many prior interviews. "But I never knew these people as criminals. To me, they were fathers and sons. Friends I grew up with, and sat next to in church."

Later, Bo drives past the colonial bar in East Harlem, where, he recalls, a small businessman by the name of Anthony "Fat Tony" Salerno demanded through cigar-clenched teeth that Bo find the men who raped the nun. How could he not?

The nun, he says, still sends him Christmas cards emblazoned with religious symbols. Does she still work in the convent? "Naw," Bo says. "She went nuts. They sent her to some retreat somewhere."

Amid visits to the corner bar where Bo and Tommy celebrated their Pyrrhic victory in the nun case, to the 25th Precinct house, where Bo invites the commanding officer to a private screening, and to the fabled Rao's, the tour stops in front of an abandoned building on upper Madison Avenue. Its windows boarded up, its front piled high in refuse, it's just the kind of place that Bo Dietl, decoy, would have used to trap the bad guys. Bo Dietl, CEO of Beau Dietl and Associates, steps onto a pile of garbage, feces and vermin to gamely pose for some photographs. Afterward, he looks down at his feet and reaches for a tissue. He sighs. "These are \$2,000 alligator shoes."